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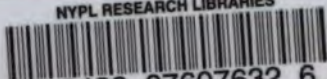
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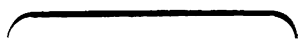
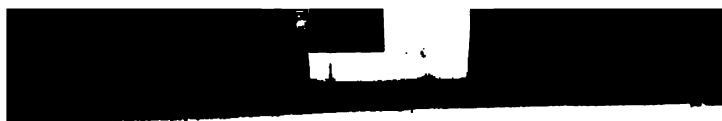
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CHARITY GREEN.



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CHARITY GREEN.



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CHARITY GREEN,

OR

The Varieties of Love;

BY

THEODORE HARTMANN.



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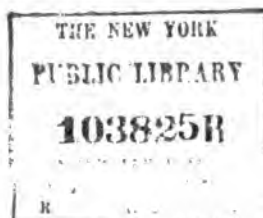
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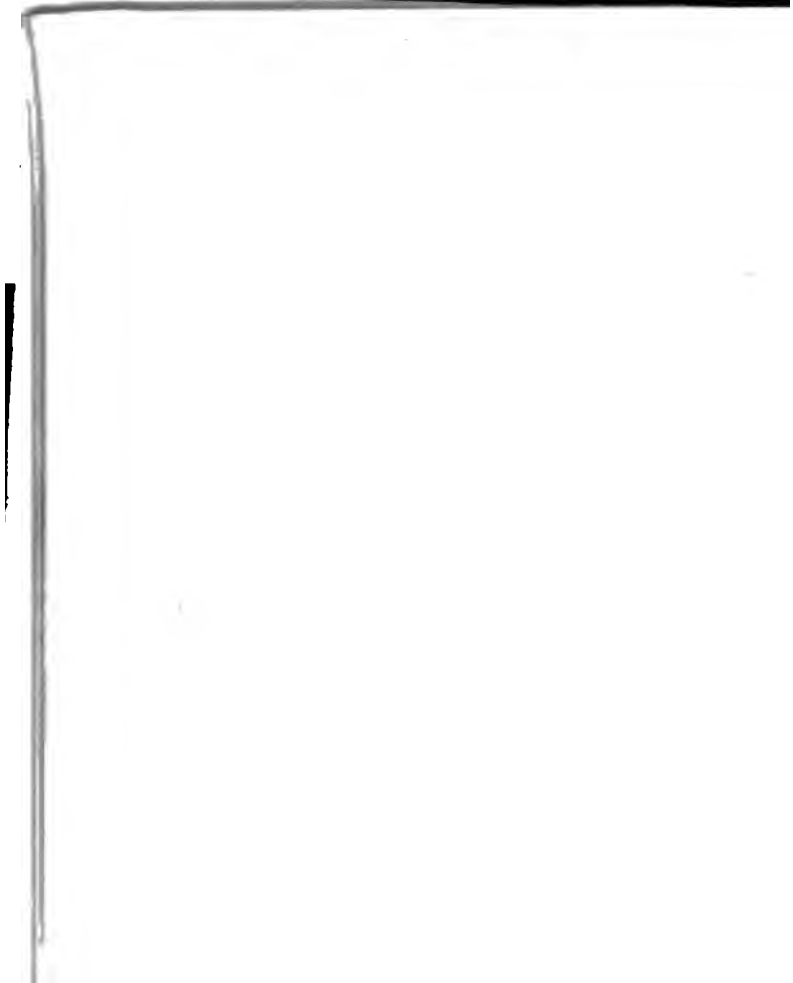
TO
CHARLES KINGSLEY
AND
FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

TO YOU, MY FRIENDS, AS TO CHILDREN OF THE HIGHEST, SEEKING,
IN TRUTH OF THOUGHT AND WORTH OF LIFE, TO EMBODY CHRISTIAN
VALOR, MILITANT AGAINST THE SWARMING SINS AND EVILS OF THE
DAY, I DEDICATE THIS BOOK. ACCEPT WITH IT THE PRAYER, THAT
OUR DIVINE LORD, ENLARGING FAITH, INCREASING LOVE AND CROWN-
ING LABOR WITH RICH FRUIT, MAY CAUSE THE BLESSING OF THOSE
WHO ARE READY TO PERISH TO COME UPON YOU.

THEODORE HARTMAN.

MAPLE GROVE, 1858

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PREFACE.

A good book needs no preface, and a bad book deserves none. Yet, as friends from abroad bring missives of introduction, let me whisper to the reader how I came to write *CHARITY GREEN*. The character is no fiction. Every personage in the volume is sketched from life-reality. Names are veiled, situations disguised and facts of a wide compass compressed into brief. I have used the artist's privilege and humbly sought to follow in the steps of the art's great Master. Much that seems improbable is a transcript of genuine experience in the two hemispheres. My transatlantic friends will recognise in the benefactors of the humble foundling familiar faces under novel names.

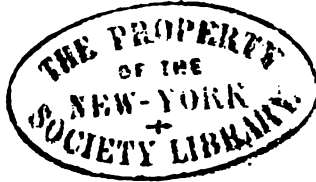
Seeing how the glad and sacred rites of merry Christmas are becoming less and less the wellings out of Christian faith and sympathy, and more a mere pretext for mirth without heart and feasts without alms-giving, it occurred to me that a narration, of some of the true and wonderful things, which the Lord of Christmas has done, and is doing, in prompting earnest and worthy spirits to follow His example in befriending the homeless, in succoring and relieving the unfortunate, and no less in justifying His Providence, by bringing to nought the schemes of cruelty and injustice, might serve a purpose, in recalling us to a more genial and benevolent observance of the day.

Many of the incidents in the volume, now classed under the name of somnambulism, were familiar under a different title to the

ancients. The mysterious quickening of the subjective powers of the mind, in states of trance and ecstasy, has been observed in every age. That there are divine dreams, as well as those produced merely from mundane causes, is too familiar a doctrine to all versed in the Fathers to be deemed an innovation on sound faith. One of the most remarkable of those occurring to the sweet girl whom the reader recognizes as Marian Deschamps, is paralleled by a similar experience in the life of Dr. Doddridge. The peculiar phenomena of the double consciousness have served other authors, and the reader will at once remember the tale of Zschokke, entitled "Die Verklärungen" and also the Ettrick Shepherd's "Pilgrims of the Sun."

While the humble province of the narrator of events, which take their place among things that amuse, rather than with high words to instruct, makes the recital of a creed superfluous, the author yet ventures to hope, that not a line has escaped his pen to militate against any tenet of the Christian faith.

If scenes of mere humor alternate with those wherein the grave and tragic or the purely sacred side of life is handled, the thread of the story pleads an excuse. The church and the theatre stand side by side; the marriage group and the funeral procession jostle in the streets; the merry bird sings in the branches that overshadow the tomb. Life is made up of contrasts. It is well to see the world as it is, while we eschew the evil. If, in the denouement of the plot, a special Providence is vindicated, this results inevitably from the combination of events which served as the original from which the work was drawn. Till we meet again, dear reader, farewell.



CHAPTER I.

HOW CHARITY GREEN CAME THERE

Mr. Bushwig was at dinner;—the Honorable and Reverend Alphonso Bushwig, Rector of Richmanstown and perpetual Curate of Sloppery. He was comfortable, indeed we may say very comfortable. Monarch of the table, from tureen and cover rose incense grateful to his nostrils. The venison was worthy of the guest. He was a judge of venison. His olfactories rejoiced in its flavor: it was high.—The claret was cool.

He had preached that day. It was Christmas. The church was decked with holly. He had preached under the holly. Graceful fingers had wreathed it around the altar, twined it from column to column and gathered it in clusters about the organ in the choir. It hung in great festoons against the dark oak of the galleries and blushed to rosy crimson in the red light of the stained and painted oriel.—There was holly everywhere. They had formed it in letters for all to read as they entered,

“Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

Merrily and bravely rang the bells in all the steeples, as if they knew that they pealed in honor of Him whose kingdom is peace and love forevermore. The gilded and winged trumpeters on many an ancient belfry shone like

real angels in the clear, auroral light. Over hill and valley floated echo after echo, as if the hills were glad and told it to upland and dell and dingle. Ring on, ring on, brave chimes! Children listened, and the elder repeated to the younger the story of the Advent, till the little ones, aroused by the ringing before the morning star had vanished, asked if that was not the one that shone before the Wise Men of the east and led them to the manger where the Divine Child lay. Fair brides awoke and listened, from bashful and innocent dreams of tender love; and aged widows,—they too awoke with the prayer-book under the pillow, and, as the sacred music died away, their hearts arose to where the Christmas music never ends;—the Eternal Christmas Land!

Jolly tapsters at their ale, honest burghers of every craft, poor and rich, old and young, early travelers, cricketers and skaters preparing for their sport,—to all came that cheerful music, pealing with a benediction from the skies.

There was preaching under the holly in St. Winifred's. A brave sermon it was and from a brave text. The Honorable and Reverend Alphonso Bushwig was emphatic. He declaimed against Popery, against Dissent, against Atheism. His fine discourse produced a sensation. Dr. Bumblefuz took snuff sonorously as if he would say, "hear! hear!" The Misses Flummery softly tapped their dimpled fingers against the Psalters, and silks and satins rustled well pleased. Squire Drone woke from his nap in the great pew. He had dreamed that he was following the hounds. Lady Drone pinched him on the arm just as he was at the finding. He might have shouted "Yoicks! Tally-ho!" had he not recovered himself in time.

The discourse was orthodox. It is a poor heart that Christmas cannot warm with memories of Him whose name is written in charity world-wide, in blessings everlasting. "*My brethren*," said the orator, "believe in God and believe



in Him as incarnate in the person of His blessed Son, our Savior!"

The discourse was charitable. It had been written for an occasion like this by young Stephen Guthrie just before he died. The candle of that clear mind burned low in its socket and flickered and went out in a London garret. To write sermons for other men to preach, sermons to be sold to dignified Divines by fashionable booksellers, written in a dainty hand and guaranteed as original and never pronounced in public, was his scant resource when dying in his blasted prime. This was Stephen Guthrie's last sermon, the last he ever wrote. He was propped up in his bed with pillows. All broken-hearted his young life fluttered out toward God. The charity that the world had not shown him gleamed palpably in visions of high-wrought extacy before his mind's eye. Those burning sentences were composed with Golconda and all its diamonds streaming from his pen. Through the chinks and crannies of that wasted body entered the light that shines on dying men. So, enriched with all that wealth of thought and imagery which rests like a glory-crown upon the foreheads of departing saints, he wrote concerning the unsearchable riches of His kingdom who came to be the Father of the fatherless and the poor man's God.

The congregation listened. The Reverend Alphonso Bushwig delineated the excellences of charity, of Christian charity. He described the pains of hunger. Squire Drone drew forth his watch, whose golden hands, pointing onward, prophesied dinner. The huge Boar's head, the spiced October, the ham and the turkey, and, oh! never-to-be-forgotten! the sirloin that maketh man's heart glad, hecatombs of Christmas cheer awaiting him at Turnagain Hall,—delectable mountains of fish, flesh and fowl,—prospectively rejoiced his vision. Simon Snail, the sexton, Martha Muggins, bar-maid at the *Green Lion*, Hezekiah Pinch, the miser,

all in their several fashions were affected by the discourse. At last came the climax. "Such a sermon had never been preached before in Richmanstown:" so said all the parish.

This was the Reverend Alphonso's morning work. Let none think that the poor chronicler of this veritable history despises the Church of God in any of its forms. Let the bells peal in all the steeples! Let temples rise wherever rich men or poor men have their habitations! Let the servants of the altar imitate the Master's example while they proclaim His words! Let the great Book our forefathers loved be given to all mankind without money and without price!

It was dinner. The turbot steamed. The haunch smoked. The celery was crisp; the claret cool; the mild and generous vintages of Burgundy and Champagne of the most admired *boquet*. "Ah! let painters rhapsodize of the beauties of nature; let poets compose madrigals in honor of her charms," soliloquized the worthy man, "but dinner,—the seventh heaven of the day, the Paradise of the Arabian prophet without its chattering plagues, the bounties of the seasons exalted by the triumphs of art, the feast of all the senses,—this is the true banquet for the practical man." That dinner complained not, as do forsaken wives, for lack of appreciation. It was tasted, eaten and enjoyed;—not gobbled, not devoured, but considerably appropriated, as should be all the bounties which a gracious Providence bestows upon us.

With the flavor of the last grape of the dessert upon his tongue, with half a sigh escaping from his heart that earth's best joys should be so evanescent, with the Madeira like summer sunshine twinkling from its slender glass, and pipe in mouth, the Reverend Alphonso rested from his labors. For meerschaums and hookahs and hubble-bubbles he entertained a dignified aversion. For the sear, balmy solace of ambitious students and planters under the torrid sun, he

cherished at best a distant regard; but the pipe, of purest silx and alumine, guiltless of a stain, long in stem and capacious in bowl, with many a Dean and Bishop and venerable Arch-deacon this was his especial luxury. Slowly he inhaled the grateful odor, as became a middle-aged Divine with splendid hopes of church preferment.

Simon Snail, the sexton, had won the title of the knave of spades, but our parson was the very king of hearts. A welcome guest with sighing dames and damsels, rotund and rosy, he had as yet capitulated to none. No stray arrow from the quiver of the blind boy had produced, as he boasted, those heart flutterings that so sadly impair digestion. His was indeed a very Malakoff of appetites, invincible.

Oh, these after-dinner dreams! how soothingly the odors of the Virginian or Cuban leaf compose the senses, till the dinners we have not eaten rise from the shades of the dinners of the past in a hospitable vision of good things to come. How fantasy loves to tickle the ear and bewitch the palate with impossible joys. The lover muses of his mistress, till the last fumes that curl from his mouth and eddy to the window mingle with the sunset, and change, in his extacy, to flowing robes around a sylph-like, maiden shape. Utopians muse of Arcadian commonwealths. The man in the Moon reveals to gentle idealists all sorts of Chateaux D'Espagne,—castles in the clouds. But your practical man, he dreams of solid satisfactions. What marvel, then, that, in his after-dinner-nap, the Rector of Richmanstown enjoyed an imaginary interview with his uncle, the Earl. "Alphonso," said the phantom, tapping him on the organ of conscientiousness with a gold headed cane, "you are a credit to the family and a pillar to the establishment. Your prayers are heard. You shall be translated—into a Bishopric."

All this was *very well*, but in our world Opulence and

Destitution are near akin, and CHARITY GREEN, as Christmas night came on with sleet and snow and darkness and freezing winds, a slender, shivering child wrapt in a gipsy's tattered cloak, sat in the shadow of St. Winifred's.

Early in the morning, with unseemly haste, a pauper's coffin had been let down to its last resting spot. A gipsy woman traveling on foot with this one child had died the day before, as its occupants said, of some sudden heart disease, in the ale-house near by. If she had money and trinkets those knew best who stealthily searched her garments in the attic where they laid her out, and then, with obstreperous complaints, bewailed that poor folks should have a traveling vagrant die on their hands.

From the threatened, the dreaded Work House, sad shelter, where worn-out poverty lies down to consume the years in dying,—out into the fields, into wild dells and hazel copses bare of leaf, yet graceful as a flying fawn that half turns its head at every sound and flies away, the child whom the gipsy had called her own, little cared for, sought by none, had made her escape. Then when the hasty funeral was over, and the church-yard deserted, and Rector and people at their Christmas cheer, coming to it stealthily with blue lips and numbed and aching limbs, she had found the burial-place.

"Dust to dust! Ashes to ashes!" Heavily fall such words as these on strong minds encased with vigorous bodies and surrounded by living friends. With monotonous blows, like the dull strokes of breakers, that child of scarcely more than seven summers felt the waves of trial and abandonment and homeless destitution break upon her young heart, till the twilight faded and the wild wind shook out in snow from the gathered cloud. "Ashes to ashes! Dust to dust!"

tainet the merry Christmas night! There were high revels of am tap-room of the Green Lion; high revels in the oaken

parlors of Turnagain Hall; high revels everywhere. It was *merry* Christmas. But far at sea ships were foundering with no friendly hand to pluck drowning men and women from their watery graves. Wrecks occur on land as well as on ocean. Hearts were foundering in that darkness for whom Christ died.


"Charity Green!" Was there a voice, a living voice, a friendly voice, of gentle woman or sympathizing man; or was it but the wild gust, striking on some sensitive nerve in the soul's ear, rousing perhaps an echo sleeping there?

The child listened, half cowering behind an old tombstone, gray with moss, fearing not the death's head carved upon it, perhaps taking comfort from the marble cherub's face and wings. Again the voice, and now more soft, more clear. It was no fancy.

Reader, have you ever heard such voices, not audible in a sense like that in which gruff men in the streets address each other; but tender, infantile, altogether dream-voices, as if they were the little souls of sounds that had not yet taken bodies upon themselves? Sounds that melt into one with a sudden feeling of warmth and shelter; sounds that good men tell us they have heard half asleep, heavy with the honey dew of Paradise; sounds that bad men affirm they have listened to, smiting the soul with a sudden sharpness of remorse and whispering ominously of God's judgments; sounds that little infants seem to hear when they half lean from the cradle with looks of wonder and quiet joy; sounds that forebode the coming of friends; that re-assure us of safety on benighted roads; that seem to break out of the hearts of affianced lovers, while the June roses hang down their heads to listen, and the "sweet jug; sweet jug;" of the distant nightingale hushes for a moment that he may listen as well; sounds that saints respond to when the door of the body stands ajar for the exit of the departing angel: songs in the night before the morning:

the still, small voice of man's invisible but omnipresent Friend!

Innocence is fearless. I think that if God ever sends His angels visibly back to earth our children will greet them with unabashed and smiling eyes. So the child arose and looked about her through the gloaming, shook from her garments the gathered snow and answered, "Good man I am here." Once more, and only once more, she heard it, and then it seemed to rise and melt away. "Follow me!" Like one who walks in a state of somnambulism, straight on, safe on the giddy turret or the steep slate roof, as if the feet were set on level floors, clasping, as she thought, a strong hand, while a strange sense of sweetness and of hope made music in her breast, the gipsy foundling sought the Christian Priest and stood at last on the threshold of the Parsonage, with one fixed thought, to ring for entrance and ask to see its master in his Master's name. Old gift of somnambulism, of second sight, of second hearing too, be it what it may, upon its slender magic thread, through labyrinths of sorrow and danger, the orphan felt her path. We shall see her again.



CHAPTER II.

HOW CHARITY GREEN FARED.

Brother Nasal surpassed himself. The Dissenter's chapel in High street, Sloppery, was crowded that Christmas night to its utmost capacity. Brother Nasal was a young man whose father might have been a tallow chandler, so unctuous was he. His long lank hairs said, as plainly as if in words, "We are of the straightest sect." Starch glistened in his white cravat, rustled in his frills, puckered in wristbands and crumpled in pocket handkerchief. Yea, verily! his eyes, through starched optics approvingly beheld the starchiest of congregations. Starch and tallow everywhere.

Bolt upright at the head of a pew sat Lugubrius Glim, the undertaker, enjoying the refreshing season as became a pillar of the fold, rejoicing in the abundance of creature comforts. It had been remarked of him by one Wagge of that town that, "of all men, his profession fitted him best, for had he wept upon the banks of the Nile, the mourning crocodiles would have taken him for a surviving relative and bosom friend, and worthy to have filled the post of chief mourner in Pharaoh's household." His *vis-a-vis* is brother Brickdust, of the firm of Brickdust, Flint & Co., largely in the provision trade and purveyors of potted meats for the Colonies. The peculiar smallness and roundness of his eyes and a certain obstinacy in his manner might lead one to suppose that he dealt in sausages and killed his

own bacon for amusement. As especial admirers of Brother Nasal's eloquence and also as officials in Ebenezer Chapel they are deserving of a place. Here too may be observed brother Rectangle Brobose, philosopher and tobaccoconist, and an eminent favorite of the damsels of Zion.

The edifice is lit with mutton dips, because the gas mains are the last invention of the Enemy. There are no Christmas greens pendant from the square box which is called the pulpit, but a brace of green grocers in their places are a suggestive substitute, set off by the green baize of the pew doors. The windows are oblong and the ceiling flat for the simple reason that arches are a relic of popery.—For the same cause Brother Nasal repudiates the gown.

The purpose for which Ebenezer is illuminated this Christmas night is highly laudable. It is the anniversary of the Sloppery Orphan and Foundling Association. A tea drinking is to be held, admittance half a crown, in aid of the funds of the institution, and, before it, a discourse in behalf of the charity from that Boanerges of the connection, the admired and youthful Nasal.

He is in his glory, full feathered for lofty flights. He soars; he thunders; he blazes. The discourse may properly be styled pyrotechnical, beginning with squibs, rockets and blue lights and ending with a general conflagration and simultaneous cannonade. He wails; he groans; all in aid of the funds of the Sloppery Orphan and Foundling Association; thanks them for their shillings, hints admiringly at guineas and waxes indignant at farthings and half pence. He lauds those female Dorcases whose praiseworthy zeal has draped itself in various wearables stitched with their own fair hands for the orphans and foundlings of Sloppery. He compares their hearts to muffins of benevolence, baked in the ovens of zeal and spread invitingly with the butter of affection. He likens the gushings of their sympathy to

spiced candle and invokes blessings upon these sweet primroses of Zion. Prim indeed they are.

After this there is an adjournment to the Town Hall, where, amidst libations of the mild cup "that cheers but not inebriates," enthusiastic Sloppery offers homage, more fragrant than Souchong or Bohea, to the brilliant orator of the fund. Disconsolate relicts, in coal scuttle bonnets and gowns of black serge, sigh inwardly as they muse of that devoted young man and his lonely lot. Comely widows eye him with a roguish glance; and maidens wonder if the profound studies and sublime contemplations which consume his youth have ever been relieved by pleasant glimpses of white favors and wedding rings.

When the festivities of the evening are concluded it is announced with due gravity, from the chair, that nine pounds eighteen shillings and four pence have been contributed by the munificent patrons of the Sloppery Orphan and Foundling Association in aid of the funds of that Society for the ensuing year; and also, as a special aid, three guineas from our generous vice chairman, Mr. Lugubrius Glim.

How fared it meanwhile with Charity Green? Timidly she rang the Rectory bell. A gruff man servant answered. Her soft voice plaintively whispers "May I see the Rector? the Lord sent me." Now that the light falls upon her eyes we discover that the pupils are fixed like those of persons who walk in their sleep. We see this but the livery servant observes not. Fool! to set his heel on a child's heart. As he bangs the door in her face his loud reply smites her, "Lord! Lord who? Lord Fox and Hounds of Break-down Castle or Lord Highflyer of the Priory? stuff! stuff! We have vagrants enough in our parish without harboring trampers.

But with a loud double knock Griggs the Postman thunders away. He is in haste. Besides the Rector's post bag under his arm what bears he in that dainty package, which

he must deliver into Dr. Bushwig's own hands? Christmas gifts; a flowered silk dressing gown; a Turkish smoking cap; a packet of handkerchiefs; with the compliments of the Misses Flummery. He finds admittance, and Charity Green, still as the little shadow which the grave stone makes against the fresh heaped mold, glides in after him.

Now a dinner operates differently on men of different natures. Some grow moody, fretful and over anxious of the good opinion of mankind. It is eminently to many a conservative institution, making them thoroughly satisfied with the good world as it is. Some wax diffusive in charity, and, seizing hat and cane, go out on errands of benevolence. Others shrink into themselves. Some ripen mellow; the good cheer makes them cheerful as it should. After dinner is to the day what the Indian summer of the Americans is to the year. The mystic wreaths float before the smoker's eye like the haze of a fine October afternoon; the objects on which the mind gazes all reflect a sort of festive glow. Some dine in company with Hope, a jolly little elf, who sits astride of the tobacco pipe afterward and blows bubbles through its bowl, such as the sun never shines upon, at least in this world. Some wax irritable as the last lingering flavors leave the palate. Of this class was the Reverend Dr. Bushwig. He was moody in his cups and disposed to quarrel with his fate. The Rev. Dr. Prettyman, his junior by a year, wore a mitre.

The postman enters obsequiously with Charity Green invisible in his shadow. Are there only three present or are there four? That depends on many things; as to where a certain Book came from which shines conspicuously upon the reading stand, bound in tooled calf and gilded with fine gold; whether the spire of Richmanstown church, built by pious hearts in the old centuries, and pointing with its time worn finger ever upward, has a meaning or not; also whether the daisies and buttercups lie to us when the mead-

ows are alive with early Spring; and again, whether the strange heart-throb in man's breast, which Lucretius never fathomed with his plummet, whether this has a meaning. Was there a fourth?

Glorious news by mail for Dr. Bushwig. Two lives stood between him and the presumptive heirship of an earldom. One of these has dropped. That wild young man Robert Devereux, full of wine, has broken his neck in a hurdle race. The Earl of Riverside's only son, accustomed from youth to give reins to all his lawless impulses, there were dark stories afloat concerning his early life. A fair young wife driven by his brutality into a foreign convent, a gray haired father whose heart is divided between Ascot, Epsom and New Market survive him. It is now more than six years since his only child, a blue eyed infant, was stolen from her cradle; abducted, as some said, by a wild woman, in return for betrayal and desertion and heart break; but every trace of her has disappeared, and, presumptively, she is in her grave.

Meanwhile we may behold in the snug study of the rectory such a picture as words upon a printed page cannot do justice to; a picture for the man who dare paint as if God meant England to have her school of art as well as Italy or Greece before, who drinks inspiration from wells that never dry, wells of Nature, and who finds, cropping out by every wayside, those deathless fame-flowers which make the grand names of history immortal.

We have not had a full glance at our little wanderer before. She is fair to look upon, though her face is all pinched with poverty; years of sorrow lie folded up in the history of that little heart. But glance again. There is more than sorrow in her eyes; a poet would call it genius; perhaps a Dryasdust, wise in the mysteries of pill boxes, might hint at fever and incipient insanity.

Come painter, try your skill at picturing for once the

human eye. The optics of a cat say dissimulation as plainly as if they spoke. Watch grimalkin when she is waiting for a mouse. The cold green gray in her eyes reminds you of a jealous woman. The round orbs of a parrot are of a piece with his gaudy red and yellow feathers. These doll women often have the parrot eye. It accompanies those surface faces that seem out of place unless worked on rugs, knit into mat stands or painted on china vases. But your great, glowing eye, full of manhood or womanhood or childhood; try your hand at that, young artist, and succeed and live imperishable.

Dear eyes! one might have seen tears and more,—terror and still more,—want and still more,—bitter memories,—and, with deeper insight, longings to be loved, which every true woman has from her very babyhood. The Christian might discern there that faith-look which gleams upon us from the wrapt faces of Madonna and Sybil. A gleam from somewhere else. But who shall draw the veil; who shall speak of that somewhere, who tell its name and place? One alone.

Our rector is deep in the contents of his epistle. Shall we disturb his reverie and say to him "Man of the world, look upon that child. What if she is the pawn in God's hand, destined to bring check-mate to the king in your life's chess game."

Sure enough. His reverie is broken. Listen to his soliloquy. "Heigh ho! the postman is gone. Bless my soul, I quite forgot to look at the trifles he brought with him.—Ah!—dessay—Christmas gifts. Missiles from the Misses Flummery. Upon my word it is something to be a handsome man, just in the prime of life, under forty, with unimpaired digestion, a good appetite and no love affairs. But this letter; Rector of Richmanstown, perpetual curate of Sloppery; a living of a bare two thousand. 'Gad zooks, I shall step from it into the earldom of Riverside."

A dream, Rector, a dream! But bring your mind from visions of honors and enjoyments. You are a Christian priest; prove yourself worthy of that sacred name.

Now he is fully awake. "Bless me! where did that child come from?"

"Please Sir, I am little Charity Green. In the morning they put my mother in the grave-yard. As I sat there I heard something calling me. Then I thought I saw a hand bright and shining as the stars, and then a beautiful man, carrying a little lamb in his breast, stepped out of the cloud and said, 'Follow me.' Then I was brought to your door." Evidently this child was in a state of somnambulism. The Rector bites his lip; his face grows dark; a startled, anxious expression takes the place of placid content and hope mounting up triumphant.

Now a conscience, whatever it be, is a most inexplicable thing. It is a nothing and a something. "It is here—it is there—it is gone." It dives in the pools of the past, where Lethe hides her treasures, and brings up recollections as the diver uplifts strangling and drowning men, whose pale faces thus "revisit the cold glimpses of the moon." Conscience dealt strangely this Christmas night with the Rector, pointed to eye and lip, to slender tapering hands, to high transparent brow, to wan cheeks slowly flushing with the returning crimson, and then whispered, "Providence has brought you the lost heiress. Behold your cousin, Rosa Devereux."

Men have a way of pooh-poohing at unpleasant things which they do not wish to believe. I myself have felt, poor clerk that I am, that my little life might have been better, that my little lamp might have shone more brightly, but I have cried "pish," and "pshaw," and "gammon." Reader, do not our experiences tally? David Jones spends his Saturday nights at the ale-house and goes home boozy. That awkward something whispers that he is breaking his wife's

heart. He says "pooh pooh, she's a fool to fret herself." and, when she dies, still he mutters, "pooh pooh, who says I killed her?" So he drinks harder afterward than he did before.

I am sorry to say that our Earl expectant did this very thing. His two jerks at the bell pull summoned John. "No man is a hero to his valet," so it is said. Dr. Bushwig certainly is not to his. "John, you scoundrel, where did this beggar's brat come from? She's a case for the parish. Send her to the Work House." John bowed and disappeared leading Charity Green.

CHAPTER III.

CHARITY GREEN'S NIGHT AND MORNING.

The winds were wild that night, and John, the Rector's gentleman little disposed to trudge through sleet and snow-drifts to the Work House with his charge. He took her to the door and said, "The right hand road. Turn at the green," and shut it in her face.

How fares it meanwhile in a distant mansion? There sits a gray haired man, as he would phrase it himself, "struck with the blind staggers." Betting books and the turf are at a stand-still. The Earl of Riverside has lost his only son. The young heir expectant is dead. His deeds go after him to judgment. We have read in the grand old book that the sins of parents are visited upon their children. This is true, and Roger Devereux's youthful passions have burned to a flame of madness and riot in his son's veins. But truth is Janus-faced, looking before and after. The sins of the children are sometimes visited back upon the parents. And again, Who moves this great pendulum whose ticking sounds so plainly, "I come back; come back." Is there a viewless Justice that rigorously governs this world, or is it only a man's luck?

Charity Green sat for a while on the steps of the Parsonage. Brave young heart, the kind voice, the beckoning hand seemed to have failed and left her to her fate.

Squire Drone was hungry in imagination, while Dr. Bushwig emphasized the pangs of want. There is in hunger

more than one degree. First comes your positive hunger, which Master Alfred feels when he has been washed and dressed and now longs for his milky pasturage on the whitest of Elysian fields. All the house knows that he has an impatient appetite. The hunger that comes on with a keen zest is earned by a day's shooting on the moors. Ruffed grouse and pheasants, perhaps a stray capercaillie, such glory sometimes visits us, have crowned the day. The morning has been warm and hazy. The birds have flown low and Dash has not made a solitary false point. Your aim has been excellent; your Joe Manton has never missed. It is an old gun you have had since boyhood and was your father's friend. You took an early breakfast and the body feelingly reminds you of six o'clock. This is hunger in the comparative.

There is a superlative that comes every night to some one, shall I say to thousands? It is felt by solitary sportsmen who have lost their way in Scotch mists; by famished men on ships when they have drained the water butts and shared the last biscuit. A child feels it acutely after about eighteen hours fasting. This was the case with Charity Green. I would advise some of my philosophical readers to try the experiment, if they would understand the hunger-state when it grows to be superlative. There is a tension of the nerves and a dryness of the skin, a wild and woful feeling about the heart. A child of seven years is not the best adapted for such trials. Hunger gnaws, bites and finally tears. Yet there was a soft drowsiness in the dear one's eyes, a sense of comfort deep-hidden in the heart, as if a viewless voice was whispering upon its mystic strings, "Be patient a little while."

The tea-drinking in behalf of the funds of the Sloppy Orphan and Foundling Association was over. There occurred that night a private gathering of the elect of Ebenezer *at the house* of Lugubrius Glim. A select and social band

grouped themselves around the mahogany of the undertaker. Saints must eat; therefore supper. Lugubrius was a native of Auld Reekie. Graft Edinboro' on Yorkshire and you have him to a dot. He aimed at two things which to me it seems somewhat difficult to reconcile; namely, to enjoy such delights as are savory to sinners in this life, without losing his fee simple in a goodly mansion in the next. The undertaker thrived and made investments.

Aminadab Vampire, apothecary, at the sign of the Gilt Pestle and Galen's Head, though not properly speaking one of the connection, shares the hospitalities of the occasion. How apothecaries, especially in country towns, preserve that fair rotundity which appropriately befits the Squire, surpasses my invention. But Aminadab, like a shark in a school of porpoises, was an exception to the rule. Some men are hungry and fat, others hungry without being fat. Our apothecary grew lean upon that generous diet which gives an excuse for corpulence and almost makes it a comfortable necessity.

Undertaker Glim has a weakness; who is without one? He loves his neighbor's goods and relieves their necessities on liberal rates of usance. But he has another affection which is to him as the very breath in the nostrils, the fame of godliness. His father had said in his old age, "There are two maxims which are my best legacy. Take no man's effects against the law, when, by wit, thou canst get at them with the law; and give all your alms publicly, and so justify yourself in the world's sight. They will soon say of you, 'He is close in a bargain but generous at heart.' There is a third better yet, feed the doctors but never take their pills. Keep these sayings and your pot will always boil on other men's fires." A cannie Scot was Glim senior.

They supped. Roast duck and bottled ale; spiced negus and mulled port; a mighty pie where luscious bivalves repo-

sed between alternate stratifications of juicy steak,—a sort of gastronomical geology made easy and upbearing the crisp and flaky soil of a paradise of paste; a huge ham ponderous as a youthful Juggernaut, and a Stilton cheese in the neighborhood suggesting a whole Benares of creeping Brahmins and Faquirs within it in mute wonder at their idol; all that Richmanstown market could supply, invited the onslaught. Just as they were in the middle of the crusade a specter from the cold night entered and threw its shadow upon the feast. Right in the heart of merry Old England, thus and thus, the same shadow may be seen by all who have the eyes to look upon it. Valiant trencher knights as they were, the guests of Lugubrius did not at first heed the apparition. Even the tea-kettle upon the hob, waiting to pour its boiling contents, with sugar and lemons and Jamaica spirits into the huge bowl,—even that simmered a welcome and half jerked up its black cap with a bob of recognition. The brass fire irons winked from their polished surfaces at the tongs and poker, as much as to say, “Stir up the coals old fellows, we want more heat.” The Dutch clock on the mantle piece ticked “A cold night! cold night! come and warm! come and warm!” Draw nearer, little child. Here sit the disciples of Him who gave His life for the world, and ere He departed, said, “As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them.”—Fear not. They commemorate His advent, who, when some would have driven even infants from His arms, commanded, saying, “Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not: and who so receiveth one such child in my name receiveth me. These too claim that He is verily present in their sect and has predestined them from all eternity to sit near Him in the heavens. Welcome, little one.

Does she hear a general greeting from the spirit of the *feast*. *Brave young heart*—does it throb lightly, with the

hunger-fiend driven from it cowering into outer night.— Does she read a welcome from him yonder with the starched cravat. The little toes peep out as you may see blue violets to a March sun. The crystal snow flakes melt and shimmer like diamonds from the disheveled hair. It is a lovely picture, one for Rembrandt to paint, bringing that child or transparent countenance and slender shape into intensest light, the light of the Great Invisible, with angels dimly hinted in the back ground, and with the eleven of the Last Supper looking out, from dim halls of visioned glory, to see the disciples of the Master rising to receive an infant at their feast, and so receiving Him.

Methinks we have reckoned without our host. Lugubrius arises from his elbow chair. He prides himself upon his eloquence. Here is an opportunity. Turning to the guests he blandly remarks. "I discourage vagrants on principle. If we set the example of indoor relief charity is defeated, want encouraged and destitution aggravated. If Ebenezer needs ten pounds it is here (slapping his breeches pocket with solemn emphasis.) If righteous men, who have a call, require hospitality or assistance I will sit at the very porch of the tabernacle and serve as an oil-filler for the lamps of Jerusalem. ("That he will indeed," from Brother Nasal.) But this mendicant is best in the Work House. I would send her there in the hearse, but the black mare is at her oats and the serving man waiting for prayers in the kitchen. She can easily find the way; so the best thing I can do is to show her the road from the door."

Well done, Lugubrius! And thou, Heaven's unwelcome Christmas gift, whom Churchman and Dissenter alike have spurned away, bravely plod thy weary path through snow and sleet: thy rest is coming soon. Thou wert not worthy, hard heart, that such an one should tarry beneath thy roof.

And now we are to make a new acquaintance. Allow

me the pleasure of introducing to the reader Miss Marian Deschamps. She is an English creole. Glance at that large mansion beyond the green. It is her home. We may see it plainly from the door of the undertaker's. In that house the old Barbadoes planter, her father, broke the spirit of his young bride. She was one of those French-Spanish women, still to be found in the ancient cities of the Spanish Main. They have not the tough endurance which belongs to our northern races. Married when a child to the planter and taken from her Mexican convent for that purpose, she meekly submitted to his caprices for a while and then vanished from this busy stage. Marian, the only child, lived to grow up to the time when this story opens, much after her own willful fashion; the West Indian, her father, dropping off when least expected, and leaving her his fine estate.

Marian was a sensible girl with all her whims. Thanks to that old Book of which we talked before, she had learned that wealth brings duties which, in a quiet, unostentatious but independent manner, she was bent on fulfilling.

Mrs. Deborah Portman, installed since her father's death as care-taker, teacher, governess, all in one, aided her not a little in these good resolutions. So Marian had her own way.

She couldn't sleep that night. Old memories were ringing their chimes in her heart, making the quick blood tingle. She hears a voice, or thinks she hears one: these human senses of ours are preternaturally active sometimes. It startles her again and again. It is as if a little child were moaning in the snow. Ah, Charity! you have found a friend.

Molly sits by the kitchen fire, happy and comfortable. It is past eleven but her eyes twinkle as brightly as if they never meant to sleep. Molly has just had a proposition of marriage. Sheepish John, the coachman,—he is a handsome fellow,—has courted Molly these two years to some

purpose, as he finds at last, and buxom Molly has owned "If Missus is agreed and she doesn't change her mind in the meanwhile," that John shall be tyrannized over, as a happy Benedict, to his heart's content.

Good reader, there is love in the kitchen sometimes, when alienated hearts wrangle in the parlors. Cupid is democratic. The satin boddice of a Duchess and the stuff waist of Molly are equally pervious when he darts his arrows. I am glad to say that charming Molly has a good prospect of happiness in married life, for John fears God and honors the Queen, abominates tobacco and is moderate with his ale, knows enough to keep the commandments with a sincere heart and yet too little to care for Chartism or the Sunday papers. Happy John! He has no fear that a redundant population will ever throttle each other for bread upon these Isles. They asked him once, at the ale-house, if he was acquainted with political economy, and he replied that the gentleman's name had never been heard in his parts.

The bell rings. Molly answers it, blushing. John is dry. It is astonishing how a glass of ale revives the spirits when a man has run the gauntlet of popping the question. He sips, not daintily, but takes a hearty pull like a hearty fellow as he is; after which bread, a slice of cold beef ditto. May every honest good fellow in John's estate of life find bread, beef, warm hearts and a comfortable home, say I; to which the reader responds, "So mote it be."

Molly reënters, beaming. "Oh, John, John! Missus says as how she hears a child crying out in the snow on the green."

But here she comes, Beautiful One, to speak for herself. She is a beauty and never so beautiful as when Mercy lights up those large, luminous, tropical eyes. There is a blue fire in them as if each were a sapphire lotus blossom full of stars. Dainty feet, thrust hastily in the whitest of swansdown slippers, we must not glance at you.

John vanishes, the snow crumpling under his feet. "It's well that I took that ale," he soliloquizes as the door closes in his face.

The fates are closing around thee, this night, proud Earl of Riverside. Jockey clubs, settling days, all the din and turmoil of your world, are coming to an end. Ah! is there another sort of settling day? He will soon find out. Christmas night droops heavily. He has drank deeply to drown trouble. The eyes gaze wildly. The hands fall. It is a gasp and a gurgle, and his head settles upon his breast. No more betting books for the Earl of Riverside.

But Marian Deschamps has found a gift, pale promise of a new-born year that is to come. These are the flowers that God sows in the winter gardens of the planet, and whosoever takes one such in His name receives Him.

It does woman good to confer a kindness. They are made for it. It is their life. Did no one enter Marian Deschamp's dwelling besides, when John came in, bearing the famished, half frozen, wailing babe? He found her, as he says, helpless in the snow; her young life almost blown out by that wild storm. The wuthering blast tears against the windows, seeking to reclaim its prey. Wild wind, leave this hospitable roof. Whistle down the chimneys of Riverside Hall, till the pictures of the Earl's ancestors rattle in their frames like skeletons. The stormy heart finds a stormy end.

But the little feet are chafed by hands that might be those of an angelic spirit, so white are they, so soft, so kind. They undress the child. Beneath that soiled attire is fine linen, and they discover a birth-mark upon the baby breast, a tiny crimson heart. So morning comes after the long night, warmth to the chilled limbs, food to the hungry mouth, and tender kisses to the dear, famished lips.

CHAPTER IV.

CHARITY GREEN'S MOTHER: WHO SHE WAS AND WHAT BECAME OF HER.

Near the pleasant city of Rouen stands an old convent. It was old, they say, five hundred years ago. There are dark-gowned women pacing up and down the stone corridors. Here Charity Green's mother has found a refuge.

She parted from her reckless husband in her sorrow and his wrath. I would that all gay, young girls in the world might reflect how soon the poisonous passion-flower of a wild youth's affections turns to a dead blast in the hand that grasps it.

He found her, with her widowed mother, hospitably entertained for worth's sake, not wealth's sake, in a stately French Chateau; he too, an admired guest. Courting days are sweet to the honest, unsuspecting nature, be it boy or girl. Good girls are apt to be courted by vicious men.

I suppose that were Satan to grow back into a human body as a gallant cavalier, he would seek the affections of the purest. It was so with this young man. She met him as the palm-flower in the desert meets the sirocco. Ignorant of the world, she fancied that the easy compliments of the lip were coined of pure virgin gold in the heart's deepest recesses. Beautiful purity fascinated the careless liver, from his boyhood dissolute, and a momentary infatuation, which he mistook for love, briefly suppressed the cool and calculating *reason* of the man of the world.

They were married. He bore her to his beautiful English home. The father of a wild son is commonly glad to have him marry. It was so with the Earl. But beauty palls with possession when the heart is bad. So the young lord, now revealed as the jealous tyrant, made his home a mockery. At last he brought gay men and abandoned women to riot beneath his roof, and the young wife, outraged in the holiest feelings of her being, sought refuge with her mother. So long as she held her babe Rosa, the child made her, if not a willing martyr, at least a calm and resolute one. Before this last and crowning wrong the infant was stolen.

All efforts to recover the lost treasure were in vain. A foreign looking woman was seen with her; they were traced to a vessel; here all clue was lost. The pale mother refused to be comforted. The father made his home terrible. The poor wife, apparently in a rapid decline, pined to see her mother before she passed away. They took her to her kindred. Here reason failed her, a merciful dispensation as it proved. The body recovered while the mind became unfixed, and, strange to say, as the physical senses regained their lost supremacy, the beautiful outlines of the woman once more filled out the shrunken form.

Perceiving that the insanity became a mild, religious melancholy, the good nuns assumed charge of her. She imagined in her stray fancy that the Savior had taken her child. She lost, but so gradually that it was the work of years, all recollections of the stormy period of her married life. Only the little babe, like a beautiful image, floated before the eye of the imagination. She told the good sisters strange stories of the infant wanderer. At one time she was in Rome with the wild woman who had stolen her and who was a fortune-teller; at another time upon an English common in a tent among the wandering Bohemians. On *awakening* in the morning it was always to say that she had

been with the child. In this manner seven long years passed away and her delirium ended as mysteriously as it had begun; but she retained still, preternaturally impressed as it seemed upon her mental vision, these dreams of the lost little one, and insisted that she was brought back to reason for the purpose of finally recovering the child. A calm, serious sweetness took the place of the wild frenzy of her first bereavement. On the anniversary of the child's eighth birth-day she left the convent sane.

The Reverend and Honorable Dr. Bushwig was triumphant. His dream was verified. The gold-headed cane of the Earl had indeed fallen upon him; but there was a trifling difficulty. He must procure proofs that the lost child and heiress of his deceased cousin was dead. Now he knew that she was alive, that is, he knew it by one of those sudden gleams of conscience and recognition that make plain sometimes the obscure things of this world. The more he thought of it the more he knew, by a secret presentiment, that he had seen his uncle's heiress in little Charity Green.

He sent for Dr. Bumblefuz. It is not every village that boasts of a Bumblefuz. Bumblefuz was learned, his head was a prodigy of development; so said all Richmanstown. He was president of the "United Societies of Richmanstown and Sloppery, for the perfection of the human race, and the advancement of mankind in useful knowledge." Famous for erudition were the lectures which he annually delivered upon "The enlargement of the cranium, as the panacea for social evils." He was in correspondence with many learned men, especially with the author of the Tadpoleology of Creation. Women he despised, believing that they merely represented the affectional part of the human universe. He was fond of mulled wine, flattery and good cheer in every variety. He patronized the Church; it was respectable, highly so; and Bushwig;—was not Bushwig the nephew

of an Earl and none of your Evangelical fellows? Had he been asked what branch of the establishment he preferred, he would have rejected the high church for too much fasting, the low church for too much praying, and the broad church for too much stirring up of abuses in society. His church was one which we will call the smooth church. Its creed consisted in being respectable and in sailing on the flood-tide of progress, which is destined speedily to make everybody comfortable in their own way. He admired the craniological style of preaching, which traces all evil to the imperfection of bumps, but otherwise he was a most admirable man. Comfortable were his prescriptions; hot muffins and crumpets to the man who complained of knawing in the stomach before breakfast, brandy toddy to produce appetite for dinner, and warm spiced wine to promote sleep and aid digestion. This was his mode of practice among the wealthy portion of his patients. When he visited the children at the Work House, of which he was one of the governors, he waxed eloquent in praise of oat meal gruel and spoke in strong terms of the fattening properties of turnips. His rule was, "You must feed men, Sir, according to their station in life. Generous livers need a generous diet." This was Bumblefuz.

Bushwig knew his man. Now Christmas brings Christmas bills. The Rector could be generous, *a la* man of the world. "Bumblefuz," he said, "make yourself comfortable," and Bumblefuz proceeded to make himself comfortable. He took a refresher to his professional man, five guineas for a consultation;—a refresher to his dorsal man, one of those arm chairs which our transatlantic brethren call Sleepy Hollows;—also a refresher to his abdominal man, lunch,—chicken salad, ham and Madeira. Having thus greased the wheels of science, oiled the axles of medicine and prepared all things for the safe delivery of a prescription the Reverend Alphonso Bushwig stated his case.—

"Bumblefuz," he remarked, "I want a certificate." Now Bumblefuz was perpetual vice president and medical adviser of the Grand United total interest and undivided capital Life Assurance Company. "Ah!" thought he, "I smell a fee." Let poets talk of the odor of cowslips, but the perfume of a fee, that has the true aroma. So thought Bumblefuz, and he replied, "Exactly: you are sound, my dear sir, a number one, best class subject; lowest premium; no difficulty. How many thousand pounds do you apply for?" When a fox hunter has made a false start he is the more anxious for a true one. Bumblefuz was deceived; the Rev. Bushwig speedily undeceived him, "My dear sir," he said, "this is a matter requiring an examination of work-houses. I have a niece who was stolen about seven years since,—dark hair, blue eyes, grecian nose, freckled. We have had reason to suppose that a gipsy woman abducted her, who must have died of the small pox in the neighborhood of Coddlington Green about a year since. Now if this was the case, as was recently communicated to me in a very singular manner, the child was exposed to the same malady and probably is deceased. Satisfactory proofs of her death, however, if she has been removed from this world, are very important to me at the present time. If undeniable evidences of her departure can be obtained it might be worth a matter of five hundred pounds." Bushwig knew his man.

His man knew Bushwig. He took snuff solemnly. The fox was unearthed, the scent strong. Bumblefuz meditated. He spoke, "I sympathize with you, my dear sir. She is probably, if living, in the parish Work House; if dead there will be no difficulty in establishing the fact. I will myself proceed to investigate the affair."

Bushwig was plotting a forgery. Bumblefuz was not deceived. "Five hundred pounds," thought he, "can be made by dexterous management of the case; yes, five thousand at

least. If he obtains the certificate he secures the Estate. I'll play him."

Shrewd men are shallow when they scheme against fortune. It was true, and Bushwig knew it, that a wandering woman had died at Coddlington Green and that orphan child had been taken to the Work House after decease.

At the time when the infant Rosa Devereux had been abducted from her parents, a sister of the gipsy, sister misfortune as well as blood, was nursing an infant of same age. As the sisters parted they agreed that each the children should receive the same name. Both therefore were known among the wanderers by the unappellation of Charity Green. When one of the died, suddenly, of a malignant disease, in the neighborhood of Coddlington, none of her wandering family being present at the time, her daughter, of the same age with Rosa, was placed in the Work House at that village. To dispel suspicion the linen garments worn by the baby heir marked with the initials R. D. and a coronet, were committed to the charge of the gipsy mother. On her death she muttered something about a secret whose solution was to be looked for in the crumpled package. Little notice was taken of her incoherent ravings. The daughter already bearing the virus of the malady in her system, was carried to the workhouse and speedily followed her to the grave.

Dr. Bumblefuz, to his astonishment, found that the Foreigner's story bore at least the appearance of truth. He returned therefore from Coddlington Green with a certificate in his pocket-book, to the effect that a foreigner had died in that place, leaving an unclaimed child aged seven years. With it he carried also a second certificate attesting the death of the girl Charity Green, *alias* Rosa Devereux in the Work House at Coddlington Green, and also remains of a child's wardrobe, some of the pieces of which

were marked with the initials R. D. "Five hundred pounds," thought Bumblefuz "for a day's practice, all in the line of my profession!" He rubbed his hands. "A pretty day's work; five hundred pounds!"

Aminadab Vampire saw a ghost. Such a thing had not been seen in Richmanstown-cum-Sloppery since Moses Spikes, a hundred years before, had hung himself because he was cast in the great law suit for the possession of Brown Acre Court. Dr. Bumblefuz had written an essay in which he had satisfactorily accounted for the tradition and laid that ghost forever. But the bar-maid of the Green Lion saw the new ghost and heard him too. It was a wild man with a lantern bearing something white in his arms. He turned the corner beyond old Squire Deschamp's gate and that was the last known of him.

Now a ghost story is a god-send. Did you ever, Reader, when you were a little boy or girl, as the case may be, coax old nurse to tell you a ghost story? Do you remember the delighted horror with which you shrunk down into the bed clothes that night and cried to have the candle left burning? No village chronicle is perfect without a ghost. A rolling stone gathers no moss, though it turns an hundred years, but a ghost story is a sum at compound interest, added to the principal every time it is narrated. Soon it began to be rumored about that Aminadab Vampire had seen a ghost. So had the bar-maid of the Green Lion. Now it is said that transatlantic ghosts rap on tables, but this one had not learned the use of his knuckles. Table-turning had not then been introduced into Richmanstown-cum-Sloppery.

All the parish was alive. The ghost had been seen; not the old ghost but the new ghost. Brother Nasal improved upon it in his next discourse. Some slyly hinted that Aminadab was going home fuddled from a Christmas supper at Lugubrius Glim's, but Lugubrius solemnly assured them that not a drop of spirits was upon his table. "They had

muffins," he said, "and a temperate repast of cold meats. If Aminadab took anything that night it must have been at the Green Lion. For his part he didn't believe in ghosts. He had never seen any, and had been an undertaker for thirty years and buried all sorts of people. They never troubled the hearse afterward. As for the bar-maid, what business had she looking out on the green at that time of night? and who was she looking for when she saw the ghost?" So spake Lugubrius.

Brother Brickdust had his say. "Did ever a pig appear after he was made into sausages? Was a ham known ever to come back to Sloppery when it had been manufactured into a jar of potted meats and transported to the colonies? Not it. This pother about ghosts was all stuff." But Brimblecom Shells, the mason, thought different. He had heard his uncle say, that his mother told him, that, when her grandfather died, an old woman who attended the funeral was heard saying to the Parson, that she recollected when the Prince of Orange landed at Torbay, and there came up a man out of the ground, who looked like Charles the Second, and he appeared to him in his tent, and told him to go straight to London and he should be king. Brimblecom Shells was logical. He argued the matter thus, "My uncle wouldn't have lied to me, and his mother wouldn't have lied to him, nor her grandmother lied to her, nor the old woman lied at the funeral when she talked to the Parson; and so the Prince of Orange did see Charles the Second, who told him to go straight to London and he should be king." "Besides," argued Brimblecom, "he did go to London and he was king. That clinches the nail at the point. It is as straight as a chimney and plain as a tile; and Aminadab Vampire did see a ghost."

All Sloppery was in a stir. They had ghost and muffins for breakfast. They had ghost and cold beef for dinner. They had ghost and hot crumpets for tea. They had ghost


and British spirits at the bar of the Green Lion. They had ghost and pounded drugs at the apothecaries. One man came from beyond Riverside, through the drifts to see the man who had seen the ghost, and went back so full of the subject that he almost thought that he had seen the ghost himself. Six horse shoes were nailed over as many stable doors that night, to keep out the ghost from among the horses and cattle, and, for twenty miles around, nothing was talked of but the Richmanstown ghost.

We ask again, how fared it with Charity Green? How fares it with a young duckling who has been taken half drowned from a water bucket, cosily wrapt in a lamb's wool stocking and laid before the parlor grate. She was at home before the next night, at home with John the coachman when he came in to the kitchen fire, at home with Molly the house maid as she dusted the chamber. She took to petting as naturally as a young bride, and was not less at home in the drawing-room, like a little lady as she was.

Blood tells. Peter Clod inherits a dukedom, but the strawberry leaves reflect no dignity on Peter Clod. Gentle habits pass in mother's milk to babes. The wild cat's savage offspring fly to the rocks and haunt the wilderness, but tame tabbie's kittens seek the softest place in the rug, and purr drowsily on the little maid's lap who sits in the corner on her low stool. So Charity Green gravitated by the attraction of blood from the kitchen to the drawing room. Old drawers were ransacked, forgotten garments of Marian's childhood, with all their antique finery, came to light, and the little one was dressed.

Oh! strange affinity of spirit which takes natures that never met before and fuses them into a kindred which is nearer than that of blood. Charity Green had found what every unfledged human bird should have, a human breast of tenderest sympathy wherein to nestle. The heiress took her to her heart; and now awoke in the young girl's breast a

fear lest some wild woman, some wilder man, should lure away the child. John, faithful fellow, he loved the stray little one. His genuine nature had in it more benevolence than all the "Sloppery Orphan and Foundling Association." But John feared the gipsies, and, when his mistress told him, with a guinea for his pains, to say nothing about his night's venture, he pulled respectfully at a forelock and inwardly vowed a stern and dogged silence. I am glad to say that he kept his promise so long as there was need. There were four persons in that secret and the four formed a charmed ring round Charity Green.



CHAPTER V.

WHICH SEEMS TO STAND STILL.

The annual convocation of King Hezekiah's Temple of the Grand Consolidated Order of United and Venerable Antediluvians, was held in Richmanstown-cum-Sloppery, and closed with a sumptuous repast in the banqueting hall of the Green Lion.

Never having penetrated into its sublime mysteries, we are unable to mention more particulars concerning it than a stray eaves-dropper might perchance discover. Report avers that the order was founded in commemoration of the discovery of certain most ancient records inscribed upon a brick from the Tower of Babel, in the days of that far-famed monarch and philosopher of antiquity, king Rameses the Great.

Epaphroditus Wagge, L. L. D., a retired civil officer of merit and eminence and now officiating as High Chief Mitre of the Temple, was in the chair. Each of the deputies, sub-deputies, shepherds, arches and other functionaries were at table in the costume said to have been invented by the chief tailor of the court of King Rameses. This consisted of waistcoats and badges duly emblazoned with Memphian and Theban hieroglyphics; nor did any of the brethren appear without the regalia appropriate to their degrees. The board itself was graced with the sacred symbols of the order. First in honor appeared a *fac simile* of the Sacred Brick itself, in alabaster gilt, and elaborately carved in various emblematical figures. Dexter and sinister, meeting

cross-wise above this venerable relic, shone the Pick Axe and the Shovel with which the Sacred Brick had been excavated, these likewise embellished with their appropriate emblems. On either side of the throne of the High Chief Mitre, supporting the chair, appeared the Grand High Pickman and the Grand High Shoveler, robed in gorgeous attire and with a port and bearing which had doubtless descended to them with their robes of office from their predecessors at the court of king Rameses. Mid-way down the table was the Grand Royal Goose, displayed upon an orb, grasping the arms of the Temple emblazoned upon a shield, and, at the foot, upon a truncated pyramid, the golden cable with the seven links, emblematical of the seven degrees of the grand consolidation.

The entertainment was worthy of Apicius, of the chief butler of the court of king Rameses, or at least, of Abijah Roast, the landlord of the Green Lion Inn. A mighty sirloin confronted the Grand High Mitre, mutton and turnips lavished their charms upon the vision of the Grand High Pickman, while the nostrils of the Grand High Shoveler were refreshed by the fragrance of a sumptuously decorated ham, wreathed with parsley, that sacred plant. At the right of each guest stood a tankard of foaming ale. When the seven degrees of the fraternity were duly marshalled to their places, at a signal from the Grand High Mitre, the poet laureate of king Hezekiah's Temple, the tuneful Timmins, that especial favorite of the Nine, recited

THE ANNIVERSARY ODE.

All hail to our founder, Rameses the Great!
He buildd the cities of Thebes and Ramsgate.
He lifted the brick from the Tower of Babel;
Then drink to his health all ye guests at the table.
All hail to our founder, Rameses the Great!
He buildd the cities of Thebes and Ramsgate.

Behold the Chief Mitre! Supporting him stand
The Pickman and Shoveler, mighty and grand.
So stood they assisting Rameses the Great!
When he founded the cities of Thebes and Ramagate.
All hail to our founder, Rameses the Great!
He builded the cities of Thebes and Ramagate.

The ages depart and the nations decay,
Like the mist on the hill which the storm bears away;
But our order shall live in its glory and pride,
While the trident of Britain bears rule o'er the tide.
Then hail to our founder, Rameses the Great!
He builded the cities of Thebes and Ramagate.

Tuneful Timmins, when afterward complimented upon this performance remarked, that "It wasn't much: merely a slight effusion, and not to be compared to his grand Shaksperian ballad on the sinking of the Royal George."

As he sank back in his arm-chair exhausted from its spirited delivery, the Grand Musician of king Hezekiah's Temple announced that the ode was set to a tune entitled "Rameses," composed expressly in its honor, and dedicated to the officers and brethren of king Hezekiah's Temple. The fraternity sang it, after which appropriate rite the Grand High Mitre tapped on the table three times with the golden chisel, whereupon each held out his arms horizontally and said, "Goose." The Grand High Pickman, thereupon, exclaimed, "It is goose in the morning." The Grand High Shoveler responded, "It is goose in the evening," and the Grand High Mitre now blew three blasts upon the gilded ram's horn of the order, and then, with all the dignity of king Rameses' especial representative, declared that it was "Goose in the mid-day," and pronounced the Temple opened for the reception and refreshment of travelers journeying on a pilgrimage to the Tower

of Babel. After this, there being no other work, they proceeded to demolish the repast.

When the more substantial delicacies had been satisfactorily discussed, and the table cleared, the dessert, which consisted of Norfolk biffins, filberts and raisins, was placed upon the cloth, a fresh tankard with a supply of pipes and tobacco set before each dignitary and private member of the temple, and then the Grand High Pipebearer arose and proposed the first regular toast. "The immortal memory of the three sublime patrons of the Grand Consolidated Order of Ancient and Venerable Antediluvians; King Rameses of Egypt, King Cyrus of Persia and King Hezekiah of Jerusalem." This was drank solemnly, standing, with all the honors.

After various toasts that followed, appropriate to the occasion, resolutions of thanks were voted to the Grand High Mitre of King Hezekiah's Temple, for the able, impartial and dignified manner in which he had presided over the interests of the fraternity during his term of office. The committee who had been appointed to purchase some expression of the esteem of the temple for its Grand High Chief Mitre, Epaphroditus Wagge, Esq., at the close of his official term, now rose to report. They had procured a chaste goblet of pure britannia and a service of plate of the same precious metal. The report being accepted and adopted in due form, the presentation now took place, after which the retiring High Chief Mitre vacated his throne and the Temple marched in a procession round the banqueting room for the purpose of installing the newly elected High Chief Mitre, after the ancient and venerable custom, handed down in the archives from the parchment scroll deposited in the library of Memphis by King Rameses. The new made functionary was a retired pastry cook and became his eminent position no less than the eminent position became him. Indeed it was a remark of Tuneful Timmins, poet

Laureate of the Temple, that "The man seemed made for the office and the office for the man."

When the festivities of the evening were concluded King Hezekiah's Temple of Ancient and Venerable Antediluvians again formed in a procession and marched from the banqueting hall of the Green Lion to their tabernacle, which was situated next door to Ebenezer, up three flights of stairs, over a bacon shop.

First appeared the orator of the order, bearing the sacred goose with outstretched pinions, supported by the Right Ram's Horn and the Left Ram's Horn, wearing turbans upon their heads and blowing Rule Britannia through their respective instruments. Next followed the Grand Standard Bearer with the banner of King Hezekiah's Temple, representing on one side King Rameses disinterring the sacred brick, and, on the other, the same illustrious potentate in the act of founding the cities of Thebes and Ramsgate. The Grand High Pipe Bearer and the Grand High Tankard Bearer, each with the appropriate emblem of his office, clad in tunics of royal purple, now met the admiring gaze. Then came the sacred brick underneath a canopy, carefully shrouded from the uninitiated; and then, centre of interest and pillar of the order's glory, the presiding functionary, Obadiah Bump. Upon his head shone the mitre. Clad in the livery of the body guard of King Rameses followed him the Grand High Pickman and the Grand High Shoveler, after which two and two, marched the members of King Hezekiah's temple of Ancient and Venerable Antediluvians, all wearing leathern waistcoats, tastefully embroidered with the insignia appropriate to their several degrees. Then lonely as

"Some banquet hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands' dead
And all but one departed "

Amidst the smoking remnants of the festival thus soliloquized the landlord of the Green Lion :

"Them's curious chaps. Howsumdever seeing as they are gone I think I'll pick a bit." Whereat, filling his plate with bacon and greens, and calling for a tankard of ale, he dined also.

Let who will say that "life is a bubble," beneath each of these embroidered waistcoats was a human heart ; as indeed might have been proved could we have gazed through a good oaken door, passed the scrutiny of the Grand High Pickman and the Grand High Shoveler, and listened from our loop-hole of retreat within ear-shot of the High Chief Mitre's throne. Man is not all gizzard, not all feline or vulpine. Mercy often wears fantasticals, while sleek Hypocrisy clothes himself in raiment of the saints.

There are two things, as it strikes me, about secret societies, the love of mystery and the love of fun. These Grand High Pickmen and Shovelers, these Royal Geese and Chief Mitres and Grand Tankard and Pipe Bearers have cravings after an unknown infinity. We are swathed about with mystery in this round world. And so, in imagination, if he cannot in reality, even the green grocer and the hodman delights to connect himself with the old epic and tragic splendors. Then too every man is double-sighted. He is at once player and audience. He admires himself in his part and knows that he is acting all the while. To some it is broad burlesque from beginning to end. They see but one side, and that the farcical. Others, of the king Bombastes vein, enjoy it hugely and swell to a vast importance, like the frogs who enacted the play of the oxen, all the summer night, till each by morning believed himself to be a veritable bull of Bashan. We are tickled trout and fools of the senses, everywhere. But there is another sentiment under this. These worthy villagers feel, *that, should occasion serve and the Master of the spectacle*

cast them in other parts, they could act king Rameses and feel at home amidst Egyptian glories; aye, and consort on equal terms, by virtue of their common manhood, with Cyrus of Persia or Hezekiah of Jerusalem. They were no more than men, nor are we less than men. Human beings love to step out of their surroundings once in a while.— Little Margery has her dream down there in the cinders of the scullery. She is a beautiful lady and has a gallant lover. They ride away together into some fairy land all populous with untold wonders of youth and love. So Margery has her king Hezekiah's temple with all its pageantry. Happy the child if she dream no worse than this.

King Hezekiah's Temple of the Grand Consolidated Order of Ancient and Venerable Antediluvians was in secret conclave. Let us listen. They are calling a roll of the members. Zenas Grub has broken his arm and lies ill with a fever. He must have watchers every night till he recovers, and a crown a week from the common fund. Peter Styles is out of employment and needs assistance for his wife while he trudges out into the neighborhood. Ten shillings a week is voted to the good wife till Peter Styles finds work. Bravely done, O workers of king Hezekiah's Temple! Let the sacred goose cackle as she will, and every brother spread his outstretched arms to imitate the pinions of the bird that once saved Rome. Many a king who compared himself to an eagle, in some reckoning day that is to come, will be found unable to stand or fly with these same Hezekiah's geese. Perhaps had Rameses, the veritable, built Thebes on this sort of a foundation; namely, watchers and timely help for each lame Zenas Grub among the toiling artisans; or had he seen that each Egyptian Mrs. Peter Styles had her ten shillings a week while Peter trudged manfully for work out into the towns of the broad delta, Thebes, the hundred-gated, might have been standing yet. Enroll me from this time if you please, at least as

an admirer, of king Hezekiah's Temple of Ancient and Venerable Antediluvians, even though I must wear the embroidered waistcoat and sing the praises of Rameses the Great.

But Peter Styles' wife had next morning her weekly dole, and brother High Chief Mitre, a plain, sensible man, in his capacity of a freeholder of Richmanstown, comes to see Brother Styles safely on his way, and advises Peter to apply for work in the neighborhood of Coddlington Green.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BEGGAR'S JUBILEE.

Stage gipsys, like our clever Louisa Pyne, are charming and poetical. Real gipsys are a wild and elfish set. I sometimes think,—it is a fancy of mine,—being a story-teller, I have a right to fancies,—that a thorough-going antiquary and philologist might trace a relation between them and the oriental Yezidis or Satan-worshipers. They are uncanny and thrive upon abominations. Mother earth cleaves to their faces. They hanker after forbidden fruits. Nothing comes amiss to them. Pigs and pocket-books disappear when they are in the neighborhood with the same facility. They are equally fond of the clothes upon the garden line and the peaches upon the garden wall. They lime the brooks for trout, and spoil, for one mess, the angler's prospects for a year to follow. So I say, may the mild wrath of good Isaak Walton follow them wheresoever they go. They "drow" you upon occasion: that is, being interpreted, they put poison into your meal chest, or else George Borrow romances. But their especial hankering is after secrets, which they keep, and will sell, unless revenge is in the way, but then they take your gold and put you off with some shrewd plausibility. The young gipsy is a cunning fellow. He knows how many chickens there are in farmer Hodge's yard better than the good man does himself; and where the great turkey gobbler roosts, that he sees right well. He divines that he shall have, too, more than a bone of that turkey for his pains one of these fine nights.

There are mongrels among them not bound by the pure customs of the tribe. Of this sort was she who stole Rosa Devereux to gratify her wild revenge. Peter Styles came upon a tent of these mongrels on his way to Coddington Green. Styles was a famous bone-setter. This bone-setting faculty is not the least among the curious hereditaments that go from generation to generation. Peter had no medical skill and was a poor day laborer, but, upon occasion, he could set a broken limb as well as any Bumblefuz of them all. Ask the robin how he sings? He could no more explain to you his gift of melody than Peter Styles could describe his art of bone-setting. But he did it.

Peter was a good fellow, tender-hearted, which every professional bone-setter, I am sorry to say, is not. So, hearing an outlandish uproar in which was the shrill cry of a child, he ran into the gipsy tent, where he found a little fellow with his leg broken and badly fractured, none the less. This was Peter's especial delight. Whenever he could set a bone he was in his element. He pounced upon the victim like a Newfoundland dog upon a drowning baby, and his hands grew strangely subtle for the time. Soon the brown urchin was all right, the fracture reduced, the limb splintered and bandaged, the elf upon his back, all doing well. This was a poor woman's only son, and she of the half-breed caste. A gipsy always has hoarded somewhere a coin or two of gold. These came forth now. Gratitude found them, though sharp hunger might have searched in vain. "Noa doan't" said Peter, "I wont ha'e 'em. I takes no gold for kindness."

Little Ishmael was dying of thirst in a wilderness, and poor mother Hagar, she too with this hot, impulsive blood in her veins had no water to give him. Dying he lay upon her lap, the heavy death throe knotting up his limbs, when the angel came. Now Peter Styles was this outlandish woman's *angel*. He saved her boy. The baleful glare, the basilisk

glance were softened from her eyes, and tears stood there as if two fountains had broken through the sand plain of Sahara's waste. Then Peter bade her good-bye, and journeyed upon his way to Coddlington Green.

Our work-seeker dined that day on Swedish turnips, supped on the same, trudged on beneath the light of the moon half-way to his destination, slept that night in an oat-rick, breakfasted on rutabagas left in the fields as fodder for sheep, and, with a brave heart in his bosom and a stout oaken cudgel in his hand, arrived the next morning at Coddlington Green, a thriving market-town, where also king Rameses has a Temple. Here he sought work. He was a willing drudge, who could thrash oats or other grains upon occasion, was a good ditcher, and knew something of carpentry as well. Squire Bloomfield of Wingate Hall happened that way and took Peter, first upon the recommendation of his own honest face, and, second, upon the warrant of his character from another of the Grand High Shovelers with whom he had occasion to deal. So let King Rameses have due glory once again. Peter, that night, having dined with duke Humphrey, supped royally on bacon and old October in the servants' room at Wingate. Your old families are to be found among the squirearchy. The Bloomfields had possessed their homestead since the conquest, when old Roger De Bluymfeelde, the first of the family, had struck a manly blow at Hastings and won this feoff at the hands of Black William. Many storms had gathered over old England since then, but the Bloomfields had possessed the earth from generation to generation, and their days were long in the land.

To-morrow came and Styles obtained favor in the eyes of the good dame. Trust these women for being judges of character, except sometimes when they are in love. But in nine cases out of ten a woman's eye reads a man right at starting. Behold then Peter mounted on the taxed cart,

driving back to Richmanstown with good tidings for his patient wife. He is on trial for a month as man of all work, and she is to have a cottage on the estate if he should suit. And Peter's wife, she hangs upon his neck and weeps for very joy. She is a good wife and Peter is all the world to her.

Love is a queer bird. Now Lady Arabella Silverdown has a perfumed cage for him in her boudoir, but she left the door open one day and the funny fellow hopped from his perch, flew through the conservatory window and was off in a trice to Peter Styles' poor cottage. What though the rafters are low and the floor rough deal, though the plates upon the dresser are of the commonest delf, and instead of the costly library there are but two books there, Peter Styles' grandfather's old Bible, containing on the fly leaf the genealogy of the Styles for generations, and his wife's hymn book;—of the Wesleyan Connection is Mrs. Styles? Brave Book of Martyrs, Pilgrims Progress of stout old Bunyan, I did not see you when I penned this paragraph. What better library needs a plain man? Let the Wesleys and Stennet and Toplady and Watts and Cowper sing to me, as they do from that rude hymn book, and my soul drinks refreshment, as from that brook, Siloa called of old, which “flowed fast by the oracles of God.” These are thy best poets Old England; best because their muse sings of the victories of patient virtue; of the Jacob's ladder that rises from every grave in the humble church-yard where the ashes of the faithful sleep; of the mountain higher than Olympus where the blood-bought ones of all time walk in shining raiment with palms in their hands. Methinks, were I a poet, I would rather write one hymn like some of these, to cheer the lowly in the great battle that all must fight, rich and poor as well, than have the fame of all your Manfreds, all your Lalla Rookhs. And Peter Styles' wife sang. To her it was no chance that led the steps of her husband

to the Bloomfields. She was old fashioned, she too believed -
that there is One who cares for us and guides His children
on their unknown way. She too saw, in the future, a better
home for both than even Wingate Hall.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WILL.

When Opulence dies the disposition which it makes of town and country house, of railway shares and consols, of Grange and Manor, becomes inevitably a theme for gossip wherever departing Dives has been heard of. Poor men invariably manifest a personal interest, and criticise the will as if they were heirs collateral. So when the Earl of Riverside's last testament was opened and its contents made public, from Richmanstown-cum-Sloppery to Coddlington Green, village and hamlet were all alive. Laundresses commented over the wash tubs with arms a-kimbo, till the frothy suds appeared to glow prismatic in the reflection of fifteen thousand pounds a-year. Hedgers and ditchers and ploughmen, munching their bread and cheese for lunch or plodding homeward after a laborious day, beguiled the road with rustic controversy. All agreed that there never was such a Will.

Giving it neat and omitting legal expletives, it ran thus wise. I bequeath all my unentailed estates as follows:—Ten thousand pounds and a full and free pardon to the party who abducted my grand-child and heiress, Rosa Devereux, provided she be returned within the space of one year from the opening of this will. Ten thousand pounds to my friend, Adam Hartwell, Rector of Riverside, notwithstanding past differences. Ten thousand pounds to the party or parties, according as Adam Hartwell shall decide, who shall succeed in discovering and restoring my grand-

child, in case her abductor secretes her or is dead. To Job Trusty, my steward, five thousand pounds as a token of appreciation of his and his father's regard for my interests. I will and appoint besides to my trusty nephew and sister's son, the Reverend Alphonso Bushwig, one shilling and a suit of mourning at my expense; but this latter only with the proviso that he preaches a sermon, in full canonicals, in the Church of St. Winifred, Richmanstown, on the wages of hypocrisy. My entailed estate in default of the return of my grandchild devolves to the said Bushwig by due course of descent, but I enjoin upon my executors to maintain their possession in trust, till full evidence shall have been produced that the daughter of my deceased son is dead. I also appoint as executors of this will my man of business in London, Stephen Parks, Esq., Middle Temple, Job Trusty, steward at Riverside, and Adam Hartwell, D. D.

The Earl was a cunning fox. Did some mysterious Nemesis dictate the document, whispering in the secret chambers of the old man's mind? There were two parties in Richmanstown: the Bushwigites, they took the ground that the will was a shameful imposition; and the Anti-Bushwigites, who said "Served him right." Party spirit ran high.

Bushwig, alas for him, this was the tap on the organ of conscientiousness with the gold knobbed cane; and now, if this child was found he never would write himself either earl or bishop, but be compelled to starve, literally to famish, on a miserable pittance of two thousand a year. He cursed his fate and vowed within himself to buy a copy of Hobbes and turn Atheist. For the first time the syren voice of dinner failed to soothe his cares. The Misses Flummery sighed.

But the will,— it was good law. Old Parks drew it and that was enough; you might hang the freeholds and copy-

holds of a county on his handiwork. Cunning whispered in the Rector's ear. "Send for Sergeant Wildfire. He will break it if any man can between the four seas." "It's a strong will," Wildfire remarked on his arrival, "he would take a copy and consult Lord Crumplehorn, who boasted that he could drive a coach and four through any act of Parliament that ever was engrossed. It was clear that the will was morally unjust. No doubt Dr. Bushwig was the rightful heir; but then Old Parks framed the document. To contest its validity would involve expense. Their opponents had possession, and that was nine points in the law."

Now Conscience kept all this time whispering in the ears of the Rector of Richmanstown, "Charity Green is the missing grandchild." He could not rid his mind of it, till inquiring cautiously in the Work House, the discovery was made that she was not there and had indeed never been there. John confessed that he had pointed out the road and left her to journey alone. She had not been found dead, frozen stark and stiff beneath any of the hedges. Probably therefore she must be housed somewhere in one of the two adjoining parishes. How to find the place of shelter? that was the next consideration.

But for what end. Conscience whispered again, "Seek out the lost one; make amends for a false life in the past by a manly atonement and by a good future. Buy golden opinions from all men. You can find the orphan. Restore her unharmed to the legal guardians. This will be glorious. Show that the old Earl has been shamed in his grave by a great act of nobleness."

"I will not do that," said Bushwig to his own heart, and he grew like a stone within himself. "Let her fight her battles; I must fight mine. Besides there is only a fancy and a surmise in proof that this is my cousin. What business have I, a plain, practical man, with surmises? are sur-

mises good in Doctors Commons? Ah! I have it. If this is Rosa she was brought here by the woman whom my curate buried; and who they say dropped dead in an ale house by the road side. She left no effects; there was not a paper upon her; being evidently journeying afoot to some wandering company of her tribe. Now there is no method whatever by which that child can be identified, not a rag of linen even, for seven years have elapsed since she was taken away." He forgot three very important things. First the one who turns to nought the crafty councils of all who persecute the innocent; this was the main item. The rest were only accessories. He knew that her insane mother lived but overlooked the fact that she might have already regained her reason. It had passed from his mind too, though afterward he remembered it, that the bereaved parent had spoken of a birth-mark on the child's person. That came to his recollection again as the sequel proves.

He must find the wanderer. But how? and if found what should then be done? Could she be spirited away? Ten thousand pounds to the finder of the lost heiress was a mighty incentive to curiosity. Now flashed upon his mind the thought, "What meant that business about the ghost? If his man had sent the girl toward the Work House and she did not arrive there, the wayfarer might have fallen exhausted in the drifts upon the common. The ghost was simply some passer-by with a lantern who must have found her." He questioned Aminadab Vampire.—The pottenger was sure that he beheld a supernatural being. It came out of a whirling vapor. It stooped into the snow and lifted up something white in its arms, turned the corner toward the gate at old Squire Deschamps mansion and vanished. The Rector pooh poohed the story but said inwardly, "I have it," nevertheless. The scent lay. "The beggar's brat," thought he, "has found harbor at the Deschamp's. I'll unearth her."

4

Thicker and faster! Fall on thy knees, Oh! man, repent thee of thy meditated crime, ere it takes shape, and forms itself to fiend-like purpose. Thicker and faster the shadows fall. There is something black in the middle of his heart that takes consistence within itself and says "she must be removed, not harmed, removed, till the evidences in my pocket of Rosa Devereux's death in the Work House at Coddlington Green are accepted and the earldom becomes mine as next in entail. I will not harm her, or cause her to be harmed.

How to do it? she was in a safe shelter at the Deschamp's. He would court Marian, a fine girl. At least he would flatter her by gallant advances. He was not a marrying man, it was true, nor would he commit himself, but would smoke out the fox and trust fortune for the next move. The Reverend Alphonso was in the smooth water above the cataract.

Had the weird sisters met him who lured on Macbeth, with their prophecies, to deeds from which Heaven turns recoiling with its pure eyes, yet avenges not the less surely with its strong hands? Bushwig began to hate the little one in his very soul. "Was she always to stand between him and his heart's three golden idols, rank, pleasure and opulence? No.—It should not be."

Crime passes through three stages. It is suggested first as a thing that we should like could it be accomplished without any real infringement of divine or human law. It is second, a plan that we meditate about, as to the possibility of its being perpetrated by some one, without risk to ourselves. Finally, it is an act which we determine to execute. To this third stage was approaching the Earl expectant. The careless voluptuary was ripening into the hard, iron murderer. How he would have recoiled from the word, but his thoughts all meant that, and turned toward


it as a final stopping-place. In the last alternative the child must die.

He would court Marian Deschamps, win her confidence and then decide. But Marian was a golden girl and knew the ring of the genuine metal when suitors came to woo. Marian disliked the Rector. One blink of Charlie Bloomfield's bonny brown eye when she met him at the County ball, was to her as sunshine to the growing corn, as rain to the early violets. Charlie deserved his good fortune, albeit he only dreamed of Marian with a young man's first, unselfish love; too shy to seek her yet.

I have thought how to young Shakspeare, the boy Shakspeare, when Rosalind, Ophelia, Desdemona, Juliet and all that dainty train slept still in the half-opened calyx of his soul like the rich perfumes in some budding rose,—I have often thought, I say, how came the first love-fancy that stirred his being? Was it in those ferny glades where he watched at nightfall for the fallow-deer? Was it dreaming on some bank by Avon, where the eglantine drooped its long sprays to the enamored stream? Doubtless then the veriest Dulcinea del Toboso of all the country maids was apparelled to his sight in a mist of rainbows, viewed through the poetical distance from the common thought that lends enchantment to the view. And I have lain, gazing up through midsummer haloes at the constellations, and mused, I too a dreamer in my humble way, what if in some world showing there its slender crescent, pendant there like a diamond of light, this fair, brave dream of youthful love grows up to be more than realized? Perhaps somewhere, in one of those enchanted islands, the Shaksperes of a kingly race find womanhood all radiant with its own intense perfections, walking apparelled in royal queenliness and needing not the enhancing lustre that lingers in the poet's eyes. I am a dreamer still sometimes. Well, we shall all know one day. Sure I am *that the good live somewhere*. They

live! And life, so far as it is really human, is love, only love. Take courage, Oh, weary heart, drop not hopeless tears upon this printed page; hold on to thy faith in Providence. Thou shalt be loved and love again.

And Charlie Bloomfield was loved,—his mother loved him. Saucy Nelly, reading this, toss back your flaxen ringlets in disdain; think of the manly fellow who sits by your side unreprieved. You are engaged to be married; contrast him with “Ma.” But Nelly, a word in your ear. His love has not been tried like that of your mother. I would not stir the gentle breast with any thought of pain; but scorn not that proved affection in this rich prospect of happiness before you. She will twine the orange sprays in those redundant curls and hold back the tears in her shadowed eyes that her darling may not see her weep. But, should all the world prove false, and your heart’s flower be plucked only to be trodden under foot, that mother will seek you through a thousand shames, and gather you, in your faded beauty, to her breast again, and cry “Harm her not; she is mine!”



CHAPTER VIII.

THE SLOPPERY GLEE CLUB, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

The fun was at its height. Invisible Momus shook the buttons upon his coat for very glee. Epaphroditus Wagge, Past High Mitre of King Hezekiah's Temple of the Grand Consolidated Order of Ancient and Venerable Antediluvians, held a private symposium of a few choice spirits that night in his own hospitable domicile. Apparent in the atmosphere was a prevailing aroma of broiled bones. The service of plate and the emblematical goblet of pure britania shone conspicuous, and, in their honest faces, reflected the broad grins which distended the cheeks and flattened out the rubicund noses of the jolly mortals around the board. Old Roger Benbow was there, Roger the Forester, master of the hounds at Riverside. An emblematical dog-collar was engraved upon his watch-seal, and he wore a fox's head as a shirt pin. His hair was foxy; indeed, sitting there among so many of the disciples of king Rameses, he might remind one of the game of fox and geese. What brought Roger to Sloppery? Lemons, loaf sugar and prime spirits, mysteriously concocted into the beverage called punch? There were lemons, muscovado and glenlivet in Roger's own private cupboard. Broiled bones were no incentive; his were the choice delicacies of the larder at Riverside Hall. Roger was a judge of claret too, and knew the situation of the late Earl's special and private bin. What brought Roger to Sloppery? He sat there grim and grizzly, like a polar bear who must thrust his nose into the lodge of a

sociable party of Esquimaux fishermen. What wanted Roger? Roger wanted ten thousand pounds. Roger had unearthed foxes, weasels and badgers, and found otters in their holes beneath the shelving banks of many a deep, thick wooded stream. Roger had trapped pole-cats and fished with young gudgeons for pike, not without success. Roger was bent, in his vaulting ambition, at unearthing an heiress. Roger looked at the fox's head upon his cane and said "mum." The fox's head looked back at Roger and was mum.

The Glee club was melodious. It was decidedly melodious. Epaphroditus Wagge had sung a classic ode. Mirthfulness twinkled in every dimple of the goblet of pure britannia that crowned the feast, and Momus, invisible genius of the occasion, shook out the very essence of laughter from his perfumed wig, and sent it floating all around the room. Worse fellows than Momus in this world! Aminadab Vampire was there. Within the dried mummy of his withered shape dwelt a grinning imp, fond of sitting at the tables of good men and of imbibing at their expense. Brickdust was there; Brother Nasal was not there. Hot gin and sugar has its votaries; I am not one. I love no mirth that has to be burned out of its hiding-place in the breast with the red-hot poker of British spirits. Wit should be born, like a sparkling fellow as he is, from the gleam of the good man's evening fire, when it lights up the happy domestic circle. Wit should never be kindled by the sparks of a burning household. Jolly laughter, "holding both his sides," has no natural proclivity for close and fetid rooms, for muddled brains and miserable, drunken faces, that need to be stimulated to a grin. I abominate the mirth that poor men buy at the ale-house or the gin palace of a Saturday night, at the expense of the pair of shoes that Tommy should have to cover his little bare feet, or the stuff gown and linsey-

woolsey petticoat that Jane needs in this cold winter weather. Out on it!

But Epaphroditus Wagge was jolly; in fact a very prince of jollity. His mirth was a great coat that covered him in winter and an oil-skin jacket for a rainy day. If there is any special luminary called the Fun Star, known to old Chaldeans, that bore rule in the horoscope of Epaphroditus. He made others funny. He talked fun, acted fun, and in fact bred fun by his presence everywhere. But the civilian was grave upon occasions too. He gave a guinea to poor Adam Taffrail, who lost his leg at Trafalgar and now wears a wooden one, with a tear in his eye for Adam's misfortune and a jest at his tongue's end for the oaken stump. He could, when benevolence plead by him, draw more crowns and even sovereigns from Richmanstown, for a case of real suffering, than Brother Nasal, with all his starch and tallow, his fire-works and his fountains of waters, from sympathetic and groaning Ebenezer. He was even known to have borrowed Lugubrius Glim's new hearse and his black mare, without leave, for the purpose of conveying to its bereaved and inconsolable parent a youthful member of the Bacon family, whom said Glim had run over, to the dislocation and serious injury of its locomotive organs, while returning at full speed from one of his professional pilgrimages. Piggy was the property of Brickdust, Flint & Co., and was duly converted, in process of time, to potted meats for the colonies and sausages for Richmanstown-cum-Sloppery. Wagge and Glim from that date were as Pompey and Cæsar to each other, or as Marius and Sylla, sworn foes. Wagge was a lover of his species, Glim a lover of the specie of the species. Wagge and Glim, they too, reader, are journeying fast, one by the way of Ebenezer, the other by the path of king Hezekiah's Temple, to the road's end! Hoard your guineas, Glim, and, with a boast of zeal for the Great Master's name, turn Charity Green shivering and hungry from

your well-appointed feast, while the very blast that shakes the window-bars wails "for shame." When you are driven in the hearse, Glim, instead of driving it, you will clutch no more guineas. Let all Glims look well to this.

The undertaker never forgot the pig. Long after it had been eaten and digested Glim nursed vengeance in his heart. Men make great occasions of little things. Wiseacre Curious, Esq., builds, from foot-prints in sandstone, made by an enormous extinct individual of the Batrachian species, a huge folio, embellished with colored plates, and mounting on the foot-prints of the extinct Batrachian, he rides to fame and glory. Prof. Adoniram Grizzle finds a live parasite of an unknown genus, never before classified, upon the tip of a horse hair. He forthwith posts his discovery to the learned world. It is, with due solemnity, registered in the annals of science as *Pediculus Grizzlearius*. Straightway, as upon this Flying Childers of discovery, Grizzle mounts and comes out foremost among the savans of his generation at their winning post. Tuneful Timmins writes an ode. The illustrious consort of King Kamehameha, III, august mistress of the Sandwich Islands, and descendant of the renowned Pomare the Great, is fortunately delivered of a fish bone, which threatened to produce a spasm in the royal esophagus. Queen Kamehameha III, in the very crisis, when the destinies of the Sandwich Islands, and of her illustrious line, are all suspended upon this unlucky fishbone, is smitten on the back by the sturdy Welchman Adam Ap Gwenwin, mate of the Buxom Sally, whaler. Straightway the royal nostrils begin to sneeze and the royal esophagus is delivered of the fish bone. Adam Ap Gwenwin is thereupon installed Earl Breadfruit and Baron Cocanut. Tuneful Timmins feels the inspiration of the muse descending upon him, and is delivered of an ode in hot pressed quarto, dedicated by permission to her Royal Highness *Queen Kamehameha, III*. Tuneful Timmins, he too, mount-

ed upon the fish bone, as on star-hoofed Pegasus, rides to immortality. Great oaks from little acorns grow.

Wagge had a weakness. If every weakness had its Wagge such good fellows might speedily tame these weaknesses, which often are very ferocious, and make kind domestic tabbies of them. Wagge's weakness was practical jokes. The ghost story of Christmas night has been to him precious as a goose nest in the fen to a stray urchin. Vampire is invited as a guest for the purpose of narrating from his own recollections the authentic story of the Richmanstown ghost. Old Benbow has been a wild fellow. There were awkward stories about him in his youth, but he sings well, with that gruff voice, and will favor them with a ballad. So the pipes and glasses are re-filled.

ROBIN THE ROVER.

Robin the rover is wild as can be;
 Robin the rover comes home from the sea;
 Many go farther and fare them the worse.
 Gold lines his pocket and chinks in his purse.
 Fill up your tankards to Robin the Rover;
 Though he's ashore he is yet half seas over.

"Robin the rover is courting," they say,
 "Dainty-lipped Gillian over the way."
 Buxom is she, and as fresh as a cherry,
 None round the May-pole were ever so merry.
 Fill up your tankards to Robin the Rover,
 Blithe as a bee when it sips the wild clover.

Robin is gone, ere a six month he tarried,
 Gone as he came, like a rover, unmarried.
 Dainty-lipped Gillian sighs through the gloaming;
 Turbid and red are the Weir waters foaming.
 Fill up your tankards to Robin the Rover:
 All the wild honey is gone from the clover.

Splash! what is that?—'tis the pride of the village.
Robin the freebooter flies from the pillage;
All the wild midnight roll on the red waters.
This is the doom of the pride of our daughters.
Fill up your tankards to Robin the Rover.
Sail where he may he is still half seas over.

Fire from the gun-deck! The cannon balls rattle,
Robin the pirate is foremost in battle.
Out from the wave gleams a white face before him;
Shot from the yard-arm the waters break o'er him.
Fill up your tankards to Robin the Rover,
Gone with the Ghost now his life-yarn is over.

Benbow liked a song; so did Wagge, but this ballad of the old Forester's cast a gloom upon the company and led to talking of sad cases of unfortunate maidens who had been abandoned by their lovers and become castaways, and of bold fellows who had gone to foreign parts to retrieve their fortunes and never come back afterward; and so, when Aminadab Vampire narrated his story of the ghost it chimed in well with their saddened mood. Brickdust was the exception. The conversation then took a turn about retributions that had overtaken prosperous men, who, in the days when they were well to do in the world, had been cruel to the poor. Brickdust thought that this was all gammon. "He had always observed," he said, "that your milk hearted fellows were not the stuff as came to be Lord Mayors, or to drive their own gigs. What had retribution to do with sausages or with potted meats for the Colonies? a man sold his meats and got his money. If he was shrewd he bought more pigs and made more sausages. He sold more sausages and potted meats and bought more pigs still, and so he kept on. It was all a matter of pounds, shillings and pence. Old Glim was a hard fellow, but he coined

money with his hearse. Yet Glim turned a young strip of a lass into the street a Christmas night. He wouldn't have done it but then couldn't interfere, not being the master of the house. What misfortune had overtaken Glim?"

Roger Benbow pricked up his ears. The fox head upon his cane looked more knowing than ever. The Forester was on the scent after the child, urged by ten thousand pounds. Besides he held a clue that no man knew of.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GIPSY'S REVENGE.

Sloppery Parish was indignant. They had raised the poor rates. A meeting of house-holders was called in the Town Hall. It was a hard winter and great distress reigned among the operatives. The Reverend and Honorable Alphonso Bushwig was appointed chairman. Then Dr. Bumblefuz made his speech, reported afterward in the County Chronicle as "Bumblefuz's great speech."

Bumblefuz was profound on the population question.— "Every hair of his wig," he remarked, "stood out horrified in speechless indignation, when he considered the enormous wickedness of poor men having families. This outrage must be put a stop to. A superfluous population only tended to mendicancy, robbery and the increase of taxation. Something must be done to arrest the increase of population. It was well enough for a gentleman with landed estates, a thriving butcher, or grocer, or for professional men with rising incomes, to venture on the prospect of a family. He had no objections to any man's having a family who was able to support a family, to pay tithes, taxes, house rent, butcher's and tailor's bills, and so on. But no man had a right to have a family unless he was sure that they would never be a charge upon the public." "Look," continued the orator, "at these work houses and these outdoor and in-door poor. It all came from a superfluous population. We must reduce the rates, cease out-door relief, *and then we should put a stop to these enormities. If we*

increased the poor rates it held out an inducement to all the oafs in the county to become married men. They were sure of a home and a maintenance at the public expense. But if the poor rates were reduced and the relief cut off, it might be a severe remedy, but it was the only one. The population of these Isles could then be reduced to a moderate limit and taxation be kept hereafter within due bounds.

"Not that alms houses were a bad thing in the abstract. He gloried in abstract benevolence. He admired soup and Soup societies in the abstract; and, could he command the skies to reign venison, every man in England should have a haunch that day for dinner, to say nothing of mutton and turnips. But Sir," quoth he, "I cannot afford to indulge my benevolent feelings. It is my weakness to be benevolent. I owe it to the interests of the landholders and householders of Sloppery, no less than to the general welfare of the property owners and tax payers of the Realm to crush down my weakness. It costs tears, Sir, but it must be done.

"As a Christian I love the poor man. As a physician I sympathize with and prescribe for him. As a free Briton I rally around him; but as a tax payer, I resist him. He shares in my affections, it is true, in my warmest hopes and in my aspirations for the future progress of the race; but Sir, I know of no reason why he should, for all that, share in my coals and mutton. He has a right to draw upon my sympathies; none whatever to draw the spiggot of my ale barrel. I have no right to be generous to others until I am first just to myself. ("Hear, hear.") Sloppery rests, for its foundation, upon property. The men who hold the property should, therefore, be consulted first in all public measures. It is very well to vote to a redundant population freeholds in New Zealand or in Van Dieman's Land! It is a righteous retribution upon those Pagan Islanders to expel them from their territories; but, when it comes to a

poor-rate of three half pence on a pound, I for one say No! Half pence are half pence! They are the eggs of guineas, as guineas themselves are the eggs of copyholds. Farthings are the goslings which will grow to be the geese that sit on the golden nests of prosperity. He that touches me in my half pence touches a vital spot. I may add, touches all our vital spots. ("Hear, hear.") I move therefore that a committee be appointed to draw up resolutions expressive of the stern determination of the freeholders of this parish to resist, by all legal methods, every increase of the rates for the relief of the in-door and out-door poor." Slop-tery was enthusiastic and the praise of Bumblefuz in many mouths.

Rectangle Brobose, the tobacconist, being present, now propounded his theory. Rectangle was an author. He had written an Essay on the Mathematical Properties of Curves. As Wagge in wit, so was Brobose in conic sections. His discourse abounded in X Y Z's, representing unknown quantities of sapience. Mathematics was his hobby. He abominated poor rates and looked upon all tax paying as an unjust extortion, and held that the poor should be supported by a tax upon foreigners. "Tax the foreigners," he said. Brobose was impracticable. They coughed him down.

What had this to do with Charity Green? Much. Wagge and Glim were enemies. Glim, as a thriving rate payer, rose to enter his protest. "He was opposed on principle to out-door relief. He believed in shipping off the paupers to America by contract, young and old, men, women and children. He was opposed to in-door relief also. Whenever a town had the reputation of alms giving it was flooded with paupers from the surrounding country." Epaphroditus Wagge whistled. Mr. Glim "wished to know the meaning of that whistle. He scorned to mention the name of *the low wretch* who whistled. He would merely remark

that whistling was libelous. Did the low whistler mean to insinuate that he was not benevolent? He had just given three pounds ten, annual subscription to the Richmanstown-cum-Sloppery Orphan and Foundling Association. But this was for the orphans and foundlings of respectable people, dissenting clergymen in reduced circumstances and children of deceased half pay officers in the army and navy. It was a genteel institution, not devoted to the interests of a swarming mendicancy. He did not believe in flummery. He did not wish to be personal. (Cries of "Oh no!" and "Hear!") But he never wore an emblematical waistcoat. (Hisses and groans, mingled with applause.) His motto was 'Every man for himself.' Let the tax payers themselves decide the amount of the poor rate to be collected. He believed in farming out such paupers as were in the Work House to the lowest bidder."

Epaphroditus Wagge now arose with great solemnity. "He too was a rate payer, and was in favor of in-door relief. If a starving child came to him at midnight when he had just returned from a charitable meeting at Ebenezer she should have something warmer than a night's lodging in a snow blanket. No objections could be offered though against blankets for those who deserved them. A good tossing in a blanket might perhaps cause a faint motion in the torpid bowels of compassion and make them roar out for the mercy they never showed to others." The excitement became intense. "He had never thrust a lass from his door of a Christmas night, though he did wear an emblematical waistcoat. Had he found that child in the snow drift, he should have gone in for out-door relief as well. It was a hard thing and would bring down a curse upon the man that did it." (Cries of "chair! chair!" hisses and applause, and shouts of "Turn him out!")

"He was a free Briton and would not be turned out till he had concluded. Dr. Bumblefuz was for reducing the

redundant population. Would the gentleman turn papist at once and make all the farm servants and cotter's daughters in the three kingdoms Sisters of the Bleeding Heart? Would he have Great Britain a nunnery, put hair cloth shirts on all the serving-men, shave their crowns, diet them on salt stock fish and dried peas, and impose a general vow of celibacy. Would he establish the inquisition and put Nancy and Susan to the torture to extort from them what young Podge or Yeoman Wiggins were saying in the lane. He advised all who were opposed to families to practice as they preached, though he would give Dr Bumblefuz the credit of being the solitary gentleman, holding that theory, who never incurred bills for small shoes and pinafores. His motto was, 'Let population thrive.' It was far better to give work, free schools and churches, with parsons to preach in them like old Dr. Hartwell. If poor folks were not to marry because they were poor, he was not sentimental as they knew, but must say that something worse would come than small children. A good wife was a laboring man's best safe-guard against crime, and a baby in the cradle often paid more than its milk-score, to say nothing of caudle, warm flannels and nurse hire, in putting cheery thoughts in its father's heart, and inducing him to save his earnings and lay up something against a rainy day. The young children in the cottages were England's pride and glory. They grew up to man our wooden walls; to stand in hollow squares at Waterloo, till the Iron Duke cried, 'up guards and at 'em.' One poor man's son who made the spinning jenny what it was, and another who put steam and iron and fire together to bear our burdens, had conferred more blessings on the gentry and commoners of the Isles than could be repaid by a hundred years of poor rates. If the old Island was too small let the hive swarm; there was vacant land enough within *six day's steaming*, to say nothing of Tasmania and Amer

ica. Let us plant New Great Britains along the coast of Greece and Asia Minor, and go there with ploughs and steam engines, free schools and factories. Let Simon and Anthony and Madge and Molly marry when they liked. Let them court in hay-fields and harvest-fields. If kissing was treason he wished to know where the statute might be found. England could never be saved from her troubles by baby killers like king Herod. He too rejoiced to hear the bells ring and to meet the wedding processions, nor was he entirely averse to kissing the bride. Glad was he as well to hear that there was no danger that the noble race of Englishmen was to become extinct in the next generation. Let us pay up our poor rates," concluded the Past High Mitre, "cheerfully, while good and wise men in Parliament are overhauling affairs and putting them straight again."

Common sense, after all, carries the day. First one father of a large family beamed and roared, and then another householder tickled a lad, whom he knew to be courting, in the ribs, and they roared. When the Past High Mitre touched them with the poor men's sons who had made the land rich in great inventions and stood manfully to guns and colors, their breasts heaved. Each felt that he was a Briton and could strike, shoulder to shoulder, with the best of them. Burdens grew light while they remembered blessings. Thus the storm against the poor rates passed over. So too the sad tale of the manner in which an unknown foundling, a little girl of seven summers, was thrust out into the snow-storm on Christmas night from the undertaker's house, was borne on the wings of gossip far and wide. All Sloppery knew it by the next morning, and the story of the dead woman and the wandering orphan touched many a heart, that proved its sympathy by overflowing tears.

Our Rector returned from the Town Hall to the parson-

age with a sensation as of impending trouble, looking, as the Past High Mitre remarked, "Like an ostrich in a show, who has supped on bradnails for the entertainment of the visitors, and finding them indigestible, is slightly incommoded." Awaiting him there was a stranger whom the parson's gentleman called a musicianer from foreign parts. The incognito having tipped John with a crown, when this dignity was turning him from the door the lackey had pocketed the fee and held him in waiting as a choice tit-bit for the dessert. The valet moreover listened behind the door.

It is a difficult thing for even a man of the world, who has learned the art of masking himself in smoothness, to be equally polite on all occasions. Beholding the stranger therefore our Divine accosted him with an abrupt, "Much engaged, much engaged. What is your business Sir? Make it brief!" In truth the guest seemed out of his element in the midst of the paraphernalia of a clergyman's study. This was an athletic, wiry man, with a dash of the prize fighter, some little look of the dog fancier and a tinge of the jockey. Sloe black eyes shone beneath bushy eyebrows, the face itself lurked behind a thicket of whiskers and beard. The huge, firm under jaw, the large mouth, which shows a superb set of ivories, both have significance. The fellow is evidently not unaccustomed to good society and confronts the Rector as if he stood upon his own ground. As the Divine puts face, gesture, look and voice together, and sums up the hasty total in his mind, an unpleasant consciousness makes itself felt. The conviction grows strong that this visitor has played a part in the abduction of his uncle's heiress, that he is here looking after his interests and must be met with a shrewd brain and circumspect tongue.

The answer is frank and spoken in a manly fashion. He is now here for the purpose of seeking to find and reclaim

a young girl by the name of Charity Green. His sister, her mother, died of a sudden illness, when journeying to her relatives, and was buried, as he learns, in Richmanstown church-yard on Christmas day. His purpose with the Rector is to inquire if he knows who has taken the child. His look, notwithstanding his speech, informs the Divine that he has to deal with a thorough-paced villain. At once Satan whispers, "This is your man. Here is the abductor of the girl in the outset. The highest bidder will secure his services. The revenge that originally prompted the act that left a mother inconsolable and bereft of reason, and that drove a helpless infant out upon the wide world's mercy has, probably, not yet spent its force. Fair and smooth wins the day. Sound him. You cannot much longer hope that the secret for which so costly a price is offered can be concealed unless the gipsy reclaims the infant. It is now or never."

The Rector rings the bell. The valet enters to find a keen eye reading his face. Evidently there has been a listener. The household spy finds himself dismissed, post haste, upon an errand for the parish book. It will require half an hour to go and come, during which period eaves-dropping is at an end.

This momentary pause has given time to mature a plan of action and the Rector answers the inquirer, "Well spoken, my man, but are you able to produce evidences that the child of whom you are in search lawfully belongs to you?"

The gipsy answers, "I can identify the child, Dr. Bushwig, without difficulty. Perhaps you might like it done quietly while the man's gone for your book. I can identify her here or do it up at Riverside. It's worth ten thousand pounds to me yonder. There's no mincing the matter."

The Rector was cool. Too much was now at stake to allow tremor in the voice or a look of trouble in the face.

"Whose child do you think the brat is?" Not a whit less firm came the response, "Not yours Parson, nor mine, but that wild chap's who broke his neck in the hurdle race."

Jack Chivers a little more than ten years ago, half-breed gipsy as he was, prize fighter, jockey, perhaps something worse, all by turns, and an adept in depravity even then, had led the son of the Earl of Riverside into many a dissipation which opportunity offers to the rich man's heir. Sally Chivers, the sister, played the fool with the young lord to his heart's content. With Sally for mistress and Jack for elbow imp the three travelled fast upon the road to ruin. Tired of the imperious, uneducated woman, as beauty palled and charms lost their power, he shook her off with a coarse jest. Sally, unfaithful to the purity of woman's nature, had still been in a manner true to him. The brother had never reckoned on this cool abandonment, and when the young Lord turned his back upon the two, with a check on his banker for five hundred pounds, he made two life enemies, who, henceforth, hiding their purpose all the while, were bent upon a desperate revenge. If, as gay men say, aristocracy has its privileges, they bring perils.

Chivers was dark and deep; Sally, frantic at first, in her delirium attempted suicide. Jack threw the laudanum phial out of the window and watched her by day and night till his hard heart had mastered her wild one; then, in concert, they agreed upon their revenge. When, afterward, Rosa Devereux, innocent heir of such disastrous fates, opened her young eyes on this world, the woman vowed to obtain the girl and to bring it up to be what its father had made her. After the immemorial custom of their tribe, they took an oath, and pledged themselves, by all the fearful mysteries known to their gipsy blood, that no child of Robert Devereux should ever be master or mistress of Riverside. The abduction of the *infant, his first born, was the primary act in this drama*

of retribution. The wind ceases; all dies down to settled calm; but sooner or later follows the whirlwind. Debarred by his compact, made doubly inviolable now since the woman Sarah was dead, from restoring the guiltless victim to her inheritance, fearing also the stimulus to investigation and discovery held out by the splendid bequest of the will, determined not to be balked in his revenge, but alarmed also lest he should be brought to justice for his own share in the abduction, yet hoping even now that he might obtain an equivalent for the legacy and still accomplish his purpose with the orphan, Chivers had sought out the next of kin.

The gipsy had known the Rector before he was a priest; while a gay young buck, fresh from Oxford, and just meditating canonicals. The Dean, his father, a sporting parson, had contracted a blacksmith's marriage with the sister of the Earl of Riverside at Gretna Green. For the sake of maintaining the respectability of the house the interloper had been inducted, through family interest, into a rich living, which led in due time to higher church preferment. Afterward, between the fox hounds and the preserves before dinner and heavy port and short whist after it, he had muddled away life, survived to bury his wife and to see his only son endowed with another warm place in the establishment, and then taken up his abode where men rank by other standards than those of connection with the worldly great.

The Dean's son was of the new age and knew the value of three things, money, respectability and family. Calculating in his very passions, if he had ever sown wild oats he made no intimacies, and so kept his secrets. The church considered him a rising man. As he gazed upon Chivers, by the clear glow of the study fire, the first vague reminiscence blazed up into a perfect memory. It had always been a private opinion of his own that Jack and Sally had made way with the missing babe. On that occasion counterfeiting

zeal and interest, affecting to spare no pains for the discovery and restoration of the heiress, he had still in a quiet way left nothing undone that might put the pursuers on a false scent, and from that time had maintained a perpetual vigilance; nor was he unaware that the family were on the continent, first at Baden-Baden and afterward at Rome, and that Sally Chivers had a child with her of the same age with Rosa. When therefore the sister of the discarded mistress, returning to her former haunts, had died in the neighborhood of Coddlington Green, in the great pest season, leaving a child, infected with the same disease, to perish after her, his quick wit had fathomed at once the mystery. The dark hints thrown out by the wanderer, before her death, that the young girl was abducted from a great lady, he estimated for their worth, and saw in them, perhaps, a plan to foist, if possible, her own daughter in place of the missing babe. Visited by a worthy and well-meaning but not over cannie resident of that parish, he had quieted the simple man by assuring him that he would use every means to investigate the affair; and, on the decease of the gipsy's offspring, had seen, through the same channel, that the circumstances attending her admission into the Work House and subsequent death were placed in proper shape for production at any future day. It was his plan on the death of the Earl, making use of a gentleman of eminence in the medical profession, to bring them forward as evidences that his cousin was no more.

If the scheme was deficient at any point all now might be made perfect. In Chivers he saw the agent for removing Charity Green beyond the reach of scrutiny. Yet the case required delicate handling, and, while securing the services of this all important tool, the dignity of the cloth must not be lowered. Wisely then he replied, "I am surprised, Mr. Chivers, at such language from your lips. I *have* recently been informed, upon the most undeniable

authority, and since the lamented decease of the earl of Riverside, that his unfortunate grandchild perished but recently of a pestilence in the Work House at Coddlington Green. It is true that the person buried on Christmas day may have left a child, but it is certain that she possessed no effects nor any means of identification. I have no disposition to rip up by-gones; let them rest. The ten thousand pounds I shall never touch. Sally was misused. It is true that I never wish to see the face of the girl; the sight of any of her blood stirs up painful memories, and though as a Christian I can forgive any of the abductors of my cousin, still, as a man, I find it hard to forget. Take her, therefore with you to America. On my accession to the earldom the legacy shall be promptly paid. In return for this I shall expect you to set your hand to a certificate, testifying that your sisters abducted the lost heiress, and that one of them, having the infant orphan in her custody, contracted the small pox at Coddlington Green, where also the grand daughter of the Earl perished of the same malady. It is thus that the family of Riverside generously atones for any act of injustice that you or yours may have suffered at its hands."

Though it was the Rector's cue to evade the responsibility of the transaction, it was fathered in his heart and bred into being through his plotting and calculating brain. Intent upon his object the clock upon the mantle struck the half hour without reminding him of the man servant dispatched for the parish records, and he continued "I know, Sir, the place where this child is harbored. I will aid you in adopting measures for the purpose of securing her at once; but must not personally appear in the matter, as malicious parties may take advantage of it and reflect upon the dignity of my sacred profession."

Chivers interposed, "Doctor, do not try to play the cassock game on me. I know your sly ways of old. You

cannot be Earl unless honest Jack loads the dice for you. I have helped you to doe venison before. I'll be frank and confess that I would rather have ten thousand pounds from you, and keep my promise to Sally that Lord Robert's child never should be Countess, than win the guineas from old Hartwell and break my compact, seeing that she is dead and might raise the devil-kins on me. We never wrong the dead among us and keeps luck. (Truly said for you, Jack Chivers; no man ever wrongs the dead and keeps luck; no man ever wrongs the living and keeps luck, however they may seem to prosper for a time.) The dark man went on, "Sally is dead and holds me, off there in the church-yard, to my promise. I do not choose to put ill-blood between us, else I would post off to the trustees and make my discovery. They will chouse you out of the earldom yet, parson, unless I stand your friend. Give me a thousand pounds in hand and your bond for the ten on succeeding to the estate. You know me of old. Frame this bond in any way that shall keep your name in good repute. Say, if you have a mind, that it is given as an act of atonement, in view of the injury done to my sister's character, for the benefit of her family and as a means of replacing them in respectability and keeping them out of temptation in future. I'll keep my word to you, as I do to her who is down yonder, but I must have the ten thousand pounds."

Turning to the sideboard, the Rector hastily took a dram of brandy; the cool assurance of the fellow was too much. This toned up the nerves, and his voice was steady as ever, when he replied. "Bear in mind, Jack, that I put no faith in this wild talk of yours. The evidence is clear that Miss Rosa Devereux is dead. When I see your niece and yourself,—let me see, you call her Charity Green,—on the vessel, a thousand pounds and the bond shall be at your service. In the meanwhile the certificate must be witnessed and signed." *Now, that his object was secured, the manner of the gipsy*

be so respectful and even obsequious. One more matter remained to be decided between them; how quietly and secretly to remove the orphan from her shelter with Marian Deschamps. Here, for the time, let us leave the parsonage.

CHAPTER X.

GUILT TRIUMPHS.

Reader, behold that distant, twinkling star. It struggles bravely through the clouds, comes out for a moment into clear azure and shines there briefly in its happy place. There is terror in the night. The tempest comes howling from the northern ocean, from vast whirlpools beyond the Orkneys and Hebrides. A noise, as of splintered spars and rent sails, and heavy stays snapping like whip cords, and helpless women and children who sob out their fear while brave men cry that all is lost, comes mingled in the bitter wind. Our little star plunges into the clouds again and is hid from sight. Well for thee, brother mine, well for thee sister, well for all of us, that there is One who rules the storm. Well too for Charity!

The Widow Snuggles was in her glory. Mistress of a comfortable dwelling with two flights of stairs and two pairs of parlors; with a study on the first floor and a nursery on the second, both alas unoccupied; with rosy lips and a good complexion, with eyes that sparkled a defiance to brave bachelors, and with a goodly person blooming expansive and comfortable in the thirties, what wonder if she sighed in secret for a spouse. Married, when a slip of a lass, to a graybeard for his money, she now was unwearied in endeavors to bestow herself on a young man for his love.

The Reverend Dapper Flummery B. A. had taken lodgings at the house of the Widow Snuggles. Reserved for

his especial occupancy was the hitherto vacant study. The Reverend Dapper Flummery's books had arrived. Reserved also for his bower of repose, the empty dressing room on the second flight,—it opens out toward the nursery,—was awaiting its occupant. The Reverend Dapper Flummery's dressing case and dressing gown, his lamb's wool slippers and sofa-chair were arranged in the Reverend Dapper Flummery's own peculiar sanctum, awaiting his reception. The Reverend Dapper Flummery's landlady was also dressed for the evening and waiting to receive her lodger.

The tea kettle was on the hob; the toast was being toasted; the muffins were being spread; the jar of West India sweetmeats was being opened;—they were well preserved; so was the widow. Punctually at the hour he arrived. A fragrant odor of lavender from his linen announced the advent of the guest, as he bowed his way out, dapper and trim, from the leathern convenience. The hostess' eyes twinkled as if she were indeed the Diana of widows, vouchsafing a ray of approval to the very Endymion of curates. This was truly her realized ideal. As the dark brunette beamed out with cheery smiles, her eyes beheld a creamy youth, whose smooth cheeks betrayed the slightest possible of chalkiness. The curate's voice was small, his hands and feet corresponded to his voice; his was one of those nice little mouths which seem designed for the purpose of blowing the flute at small parties. The widow met him with "Welcome to Sloppery; consider yourself, my Dear Sir, master of the household," and here the gay eyes again twinkled demurely and the mellow voice half purred half cooed, "I am sure we shall be good friends."

Our friend, whom we have met before under the droppings of Ebenezer, Rectangle Brobose, is the only lodger besides who partakes of the widow's hospitalities. Rectangle cherishes honorable designs upon the widow, honorable designs upon her seven thousand pounds in the four per

cents, honorable designs upon her snug double parlored mansion, Clematis Bower the young parson styled it afterward. All these were to Rectangle as honeysuckles in June to a hungry butterfly, or the sweetest and fullest blown of thistles to patient grizzle, who pricks up his long ears upon the common while his mouth waters at the sight.

Grizzle sees but one thistle for him in all the field. This he contemplates with languid admiration, slowly enjoying his provender before hand in expectancy and hope; but when an intruder appears unexpectedly, his heels are in the air while his nostrils blow a trumpet blast of defiance. As the tobacconist eyed the widow, brave in cherry-colored ribbons and glossy silk, his heart surrendered at discretion. No longer would he nibble at this tempting prize; he would propose that very night. Brobose glanced at the tea-pot, sniffed the sweatmeats, smelt the toast and had a presentiment of muffins. He was a valiant trencher knight approaching a veritable field of the cloth of gold.

The portrait of the late Mr. Stephen Snuggles shakes its powdered wig no more from its carved and gilded frame. The widow has had it painted out; and herself as a gentle shepherdess, pensively holding a crook and leading a little lamb by a blue ribbon, while contemplating the distant village spire, painted in. The other works of art upon the walls betray her taste. Over the chimney piece we may discover an oriental scene, where two youthful lovers are feasting together on kabobs, and a pilau garnished with sweetmeats, while sherbet and coffee are waiting to slake their thirst. Evidently, love in a cottage is not the widow's beau ideal; it is love in a larder. The sentiment garnishes the substantials, just as the prize turkey at the grocers bears a crimson rosette on his capacious breast.

A day after the fair, thou man of rappee and maccoboy! Like the vanishing fumes of thy own tobacco, the wreaths of the pipe that Hope lit melt in airy nothingness, while

Desperation crushes the unlucky bowl beneath his boot heel. In her most charming manner, the widow makes the old lodger acquainted with the new one. "Mr. Brobose, allow me the pleasure of introducing the Reverend Dapper Flummery." Dapper is charmed to meet the tobacconist, and hopes privately that he is a churchman. The curate's manner is perfect; he ogles the widow with mild eyes. His little heart goes pit-a-pat. As he meets her roguish glance, coyly and modestly withdrawn, he blushes like fourteen at the first compliment of a dancing master. This Dapper is an honest little fellow in his way, and means harm to no one, so he gives his friendly little hand to the tobacconist, and is charmed to make his acquaintance; but Brobose snuffs a rival and is rectilinear and majestic, while the widow enjoys the scene. So expands the full blown rose approached by two warring Zephyrs. But Zephyr Brobose, though he may bluster, will find in Zephyrus Flummery a dangerous competitor. The widow Snuggles is in spirits. Evidently, that tea table, designed by the cabinet maker for six, will not be able long to make room for three. Doubtless, reader, you and I in our youthful days have found this an awkward cypher. Though Rory O'More sings, "There's luck in odd numbers," we have both had reason to opine that the even had the best chance. Two and two the girls and boys delight to loiter in the tender moonlight, but the scene loses its charm when that cousin makes up the trio. But now the widow, with her own fair hands, makes tea, while the buttered muffins and the browned toast, the West India sweetmeats and the west of England landlady, combine to display before the delighted vision of the curate a charming landscape of comfort and satisfaction. Dapper is at home. Rectangle will not propose to-night, nor will he to-morrow night. Rectangle, it is to be feared, will enlist under the banner of Bumblefuz, and declaim, with innumerable X Y Z's and

unknown quantities, against the evils of injudicious matrimony and a redundant population.

The Rev. Dapper Flummery, B. A., has recently been inducted into orders. The former curate having been removed to a field of labor in the Welsh mountains, his successor airs a maiden surplice as assistant to the Reverend Alphonso Bushwig, Rector of Richmaustown and perpetual curate of Sloppery. The cares of the parish devolve exclusively upon the youthful Levite for the ensuing fortnight, during which the Rector is to be absent, having various affairs of his own to dispose of, at some of which, reader, you and I have had a glance.

"Delicious bower of repose," soliloquized the Reverend Dapper on retiring to his bachelor's apartment for the night. The chaste hands of the widow had spread that faultless toilet. Never had Dapper been so comfortable. The slippers were warmed before the fire, and snowy sheets gently steamed with a delicate reminiscence of the warming pan. The pillow cases were ruffled. "I wonder," thought the curate, "if the widow is always unruffled;" he admired a gentle disposition. He played upon his flute. The widow listened through the good oak panels and fell asleep at last, in her quiet dormitory, to the blended echoes of "Life let us cherish," and "Home, sweet Home."

Brobose retired in due time to his couch, pulled off his boots viciously, donned his night-cap ferociously, and listened to the last dying cadence of the flutist desperately. Rectangle was jealous. The widow Snuggles rose, next morning, like a double peony. Never had the fair widow appeared so charming before. Brobose rose warlike, nor was the pent storm within soothed to rest as he heard the fascinating hostess compliment the unsuspecting swain upon the delightful strains which had lulled her to repose. Flute players have their weakness. Dapper was charmed and began to reflect that the widow Snuggles was a very supe-

rior person indeed. He timidly eyed her, while a new sensation fluttered in his unsophisticated heart. Brobose was a tough old stager, and adjourned to the tobacco shop vowing to pull the curate's nose if he disturbed him in that manner another night. He was doomed to be disturbed, nevertheless.

Marian Deschamps leaves to-day on a visit of a week to Charlie Bloomfield's sisters. Bless these sisters, they understood Charlie better than did his mother. She, worthy lady, suggested chamomile tea and an infusion of quassia as a tonic and febrifuge. The girls were natural homeopaths, and practiced upon the rule, *similia similibus curantur*. They argued thus: Charlie is in love: but with who? Letitia Drone can't be the party, for Charlie romps with her as he does with us, and treats her with no more ceremony. It isn't Letitia. The Misses Flummery clearly are not to be thought of. Miss Arabella, the eldest, sent Charlie a flannel waistcoat, fearing, in an affectionate way, that he might be careless when he went out shooting, and his chest was so delicate. Charlie used the waistcoat to clean his gun. Evidently not Miss Arabella, and as evidently none of the Flummery race. When Miss Simper came Charlie always recollected that he had some affairs to transact at Coddlington Green. When old Lady Walton drove from the Abbey with Miss Walton and Miss Sophonisbia Walton, Charlie was sure to recollect that he was charged by his father with some particular business and could not possibly be at home; but what that particular business was no one could find out. Who could it be?

The girls were in extacies. Mary, the eldest, being a prime favorite, had charge of Charlie's keys. Looking in a certain depository in his sanctum she found, treasure of treasures, a dainty lace pocket handkerchief. Open sesame. Ali Baba has entered that mysterious cave, the breast of Charlie Bloomfield, a female Ali Baba in crinoline, but she

has dropped a kerchief while turning away after having rifled it of its most precious contents. It is the same handkerchief that Marian Deschamps missed so unaccountably when returning from the County ball. M. D. embroidered in the corner reveals the secret to Charlie Bloomfield's sister. She is a sly puss. After dinner, when in the garden, she pulls Charlie's ear, and says, whispering, "M. D." Look at the boy's face, crimson to the roots of the hair. Never mind, Charlie, induct Mary into your confidence, and in future take care of the keys.

Marian Deschamps had a call next day, from the Misses Bloomfield of Wingate Hall. Where had their dear friend Marian been so long? They really felt slighted: she must come and spend a week with them. They had sense enough to say nothing about Charlie. Maiden delicacy must not be startled. She was not invited on Charlie's account, oh no! There were new ball dresses to show, and a consultation to be held about their making up, new sketches to be admired, and such charming music just received from London. A party was on the *tapis*. There was a new pony to ride, and such fun for us girls.

Three graces! Let us take a look at them. Mary Bloomfield is like her brother Charlie, just the slightest blink of wit and merriment in her deep earnest eyes, a thorough English girl, hair in wavy curls. She will be when forty slightly inclined to *enbonpoint*, but now is like the slender crescent, elate to shine in young loves' crimson skies. That's Mary. This fair one with the golden locks, whom Carlo Dolci would have set as an angel in the midst of sunny clouds, and thus have given her sweet image name and place amidst earth's loveliest memories, rejoices in the fun abounding name of Kate; the majority of Kates are hoydens and romps, but this Kate of Kates is near akin to sylphs and fairies.

Between the sisters, but taller, statelier, in blushing

seventeen, is Marian, a tropic island of ungathered beauty, a virgin world in love's unfathomed ocean waiting for its Columbus to unfurl the standard and take possession in King Hymen's name, with solemn pomp and stately ceremony, befitting such high occasion. She, careless and merry with her jests and laughter as any fancy free Diana, she is going with them. Oh! Mary Bloomfield, this comes of your unwarrantable curiosity. *Similia Similibus Curantur*. You are Cupid's messenger now, gay Miss, but beware. Cupid's messengers become his victims. He has an eye on you. The ides of January are not gone.

"Stars and roses, what witch have we here. Marian Deschamps where in the graces' name did you pick up this queer, funny little thing. Who ever! And what is her name? "That, ladies, is my adopted child. Let me make you acquainted with each other. Charity Green these are the Misses Bloomfield. Misses Bloomfield this is Charity Green."

Young ladies have a practice of kissing. They commence on their dolls. We talked awhile ago about the three degrees of hunger; this mystic number belongs also to the kiss. A German writer described it as a dish of sweetmeats eaten with crimson spoons. There is your kiss valiant with our bachelor uncle when he comes up for the November shooting; it is, properly speaking, a smack. There is your kiss sympathetic, when Clarrissa's rich aunt's legacy has finally fallen in. You pay a visit of condolence to the heiress, who is in sumptuous mourning. You put your handkerchief to your eyes for a moment on entering the apartment. The heiress rises with her handkerchief to her eyes; you purr a low sound of greeting, that is if you are a lady, and kiss Clarissa; this is the kiss sympathetic. You take afterward a little cake and wine. There is the kiss formal; Miss Belina Dash is on the list of your visiting acquaintances. She is in your circle, and calls ceremoniously in her

carriage. Now fie on these kisses of formality. Call icicles sunbeams, or snow flakes roses, but call not these things kisses. You might as well interchange osculatory greetings between two molds of blanc mange or two lumps of cold pudding. There is the kiss prudential; you have done something to displease Ma, so when Ma comes home you kiss her to put her in good humor beforehand. Next we come to the kiss patronising which lady Alamode bestows upon her protégé. Then there is the kiss ecclesiastical, which our minister places upon the dimpling and teary cheeks of the bride, just united in the holy bonds of matrimony. After this draws near the state kiss which high dignitaries interchange before the public on coronation days and the like. There is the kiss canine, which Araminta Foozle bestows upon her lap dog. The girl who will kiss a dog deserves never to have a husband. There is the professional kiss, which the great Dr. Bumblefuz bestows upon the children of his wealthy patients, taking care first to notice that their rosy cheeks and pouting lips are guiltless of treacle. Following is the kiss devout, which brother Nasal bestows, turning up meanwhile the whites of his eyes, when he consoles with the afflicted Tabithas of his sheepfold. Then succeeds the kiss paternal and maternal; a real kiss that, when the little ones toddle up and say good night, blinking all the while from their sleepy eyes. You think of those kisses afterward, when Willie or Edith are in the cold ground. Sweet and holy memories revive; you wonder if when you meet them again they will come to you as children; and then you think of the sermon that good old Dr. Hartwell preached on the anniversary of the day when they went home, to the better home; and the heart bounds within the breast at the hope of finding them grown up to the golden prime of the Immortals, beautiful and stately upon the hills of God. There is the kiss silent, interchanged at the parting of the ways, when you press your

lips on your Nellie's cold face, when her eyes close and her little white hand just quivers and is still, and she walks away with the angels into the mystic land; and you return to your books, your profession, your dusty cares, but think at night, in the dead hour, of where she is now? and wonder if she ever moves, a sacred apparition, a messenger of faith and mercy, between your spirit and the stars. There is the kiss of betrayal, when the lips meet and all is not right in the holy eyes of Heaven; the first red bubble of the cup that in its dregs is ruin and madness, the cup that shows in its enchanted gleam broken hearts, broken oaths, mothers dying over the shame of their children, gray haired fathers with their white locks all dabbled in blood, cursing the betrayer and imprecating the vengeance of eternity upon his head. There is the kiss wanton, which Delilah knows, and with it she hunts for the precious life.

We come back to the kiss confidential. Mary and Marian, when they interchange love secrets, some balmy summer eve hereafter, will melt into slumber with that kiss. Last is the lover's kiss when pure hearts and fond ones break from the hallowed silence of their first affection, and Cupid and Psyche with their unseen winglets fan the bright embers of the soul into a quenchless flame. The kiss of courtship is sweet. You linger at the garden gate. The pale moon shows her tender orb. The marble swans in the fountain twine their snowy necks amidst the splashing and dimpling waters. Borne from the orchard comes the scent of apple blossoms mingled with the honied fragrance of lilacs and syringas; and hark, the first nightingale of the season in yonder thicket awakes his amorous lay. The night dew is falling, yet you linger. Fond words have been interchanged but there is something yet. Your lips have never touched that dear one's dimpled mouth. You are a boy-lover, and woo her as yet with

The desire of the north for the star,
Of the day for the morrow;
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow.

She withdraws her coy yet half-reluctant head. "Good night," she says, "Willie," and half turns from you; but once more the eyes meet, there is a wild thrill at the heart. Your hand dares to steal lightly round her waist, and then—is she angry? You have called the tears into those downcast eyes, and her face is like a crimson rose. She is gone.

She is not angry, the dear one. You linger, though long since the nightingale has hushed his voice. The scent of the night-flowers grows more intensely sweet. The moon rides in her full glory in the cloudless meridian. You watch the little glimmer of the taper through her window; you know that window. You envy the silent stars that shine so calmly against the grey old tower where she sleeps. The twinkling light goes out. Ah, Willie! lover as you are, could you listen to the low, murmured prayer as she kneels there, all in maiden white, you would have no reason to ask "Is she angry?" The lips that but now for one sweet moment touched your own are breathing orisons for you to the lovers' God.

And start not, man of cold heart and narrow faith, at this phrase, the lovers' God. He who came down to be a guest at Cana's obscure festivity and condescended there to turr the water for those humble merry makers into wine of royal price, He turns life's common draught even now into the vintage that makes glad the human heart. You shall go with me sometime to Riverside Church and hear good Dr. Hart well preach from that golden sentence, God is love.

She is asleep. Return home, to your own dear home Remember, no base alloy must mingle with this pure dream

of bliss. Kcep your heart unstained, young lover, jest not with worldlings, profane not such holy mysteries. There may come a day, if God so wills, when she will be all your own. In that glad hour remember that nuptial love is His great gift. Take her to your heart and wear her there. Wedded lovers as you are, be true to all the heaven-born affections that now make the lips their altar and pour out there the fragrant incense which is next akin to the aromas of the immortal fields. Shall I stop here? The kiss of courtship and the kiss of early marriage, what if after all they are but the foretastes of the kiss of the reunion, when the two who loved so truly on earth meet for the first time beyond the dark waters and swelling floods. We shall know. Ah! the dear ones who have gone before, they know already!

Marian Deschamps has gone away with the two sisters to Wingate Hall, leaving her little snow treasure in the especial charge of Mrs. Portman. John and Sally are not to leave the mansion and on no account are they to lose sight of Charity Green. That night the coach house takes fire; the hay loft is in a light blaze; the horses are pulled out half smothered; the stone walls of the building are only left; the dwelling itself is saved with difficulty. In the wild hubbub no one notices at first that Charity Green is gone. Aye, little star, dark rolls the cloud that overtakes thee, but trust in God. He also is in the cloud.

CHAPTER XI.

ROGER BENBOW.

The Forester is in his lodge, but not alone. That shaggy fellow in the corner is the whipper in. Roger saved him from the county jail when he was a lad, and has retained him since as care keeper of the hounds. He knows but three things well, when a dog is ailing, when poachers are after the deer, and how to obey his master. He is a human hound, half fox, with all an animal's instinct, and the same blind, unreasoning fidelity to the hand that feeds it. He hates where Roger hates, loves where Roger loves, and executes the Forester's bidding, through thick and thin, without a questioning, "Why is it?"

This shaggy fellow is deep in the contents of a meat pie. A horn of old ale hums at his elbow; it is mighty ale, such as Cromwell's Ironsides used to drink before they smote down the men of Belial with their basket hilted swords; such ale as was served round in black jacks upon the hall tables of the old cavaliers. It is from a butt that was brewed the October that Robert Devereux was born. It is started now by Roger and his man, that each may have a mighty stirrup cup, before they go forth upon the track of the missing heiress, Robert Devereux's child.

The Forester, no less cool in deliberation than quick and resolute in action, has gathered up, one by one, a number of particulars which almost convince him of the identity of Charity Green with the grand-child of the Earl. John *Chivers*, skulking from ale-house to ale-house, and wear-

ing the appearance of an Italian, has been stealthily prowling about, and is now, or was but a few hours since, harbored in the neighborhood of Richmanstown. It is altogether probable that Sally, the discarded mistress of Lord Robert, was the wandering gipsy who died suddenly by the road side, and was buried in the churchyard at St. Winifreds. It is certain that the other sister, Martha, though traveling under another name, sickened of the small pox, and was interred near Coddlington Green within the twelvemonth. The Forester has also a shrewd suspicion of Dr. Bushwig's purpose to identify Martha's deceased daughter with Rosa, and to claim the earldom on producing evidences of her death. But one link is missing in his own chain of evidence, and this he soon hopes to rivet in its place. First determining to secure it by the arrest of Chivers on the old charge of abduction, he then designs boldly to assert that the heiress is found.

We leave the Forester and his man mounting in haste, and armed with a warrant for the arrest of Chivers. The night is chosen for the enterprise, because then the gipsy, it is hoped, will be found in his retreat. It is his expectation that by to-morrow the missing evidence will be in his possession ; but that to-morrow is far away ; if it ever dawns, redly its light will shine beyond the seas. Yet the night is not without interest in these annals ; before its gray dawning Charity Green will be abducted from Marian's protecting home. They find that the man of whom they are in search has disappeared from his quarters, leaving nothing and affording no clue by which his discovery may be effected.

As these slow hours wear away, heavily drugged, and in a stupor which is nearer death than sleep, the orphan is being whirled toward a sea port by a rapid train. The foreigner, of Italian aspect, by whom she is accompanied, mutters, in broken patois, to those who, with friendly words, take notice of his charge, that his daughter has been ill, very

ill, indeed. This is the age of speed in traveling; hurried into busy, bustling Liverpool, the Rector of Richmanstown, true to his promise, sees them safely on board the steamer, receives from Chivers a certificate to the effect that Rosa Devereux was stolen by himself and sister, placed in charge of Martha, contracted an infectious malady, is dead and buried at Coddlington Green. A thousand pounds, in bright gold, are counted, and stowed away in the gipsy's luggage, and a secret pocket contains the precious bond which secures to him the legacy of the Earl. So far the dark plot has thriven well. Returning to the lodge, after his ineffectual search, the Forester is silent as ever, nor can a shade of disappointment be discovered on his weather-beaten visage. Only he mutters to the fox's head upon his walking stick, that faithful confidant and counsellor, "Never mind, my boy, he carries his brush a little longer, but we will have it yet." Meanwhile, new evidences, of at least a circumstantial value, accumulate. The Rector's gentleman avails himself of the opportunity afforded by his master's absence to visit Riverside. The valet is fascinated by the charms of the Forester's niece, and Roger hums an old distich,

"He a wise man was I trow,
With the heifer who did plough."

Benbow is reported to have a snug little fortune stored away, and wifeless and childless himself, this pretty niece, a prime favorite, turns up her nose at the Rector's gentleman. But the Forester is up by times, and whispers in her ear, "Harkee, lass! thee be civil to that ass of the parson's. Ask him to sup with thee at the lodge and butter him well."

In his cups that evening, with Roger's old October humming in his brain and Roger's young niece blushing and

bridling at his compliments, the eaves-dropper and the spy ventures on a little love making, and, to enhance himself in the sight of his fair mistress, drops mysterious hints of a secret which is going to bring him golden guineas. Benbow casually opens the door and walks into the apartment, gives one glance from beneath his shaggy eye-brows at the flustered swain, affects for the first time to notice his presence, bestows upon him a cordial grip, fills up the glasses and bids him take a hearty pull and make himself comfortable, then mutters something about a dog that he must look after and walks quietly into the next room, leaving the door ajar. Susy continues the buttering process, and the secret begins to ooze out, drop by drop. Dr. Bushwig had a gipsy with him in the study and sent John off for the parish books. The valet, returning to his post within ear-shot, heard something about certificates and a thousand guineas, and the Earl's legacy; something too about a child, Liverpool and a vessel to America. In the morning the Rector's man discovered himself still in the Forester's lodge, and indistinctly remembered that Benbow having come in with his man, and finding him overcome with ale, had lifted him on a settle, bidding him rest there till his head should be clear again. Gentle Susy was not visible at that early hour, so the gentleman's gentleman sauntered back to the neighboring cottage occupied by his kin.

Early in the morning the Forester is seen departing on a short journey, as he says, "To see about some of the Earl's horses, as was in training and must now be brought home." Arriving in Liverpool a day too late, he has his labor for his pains, but quietly returns and is busy with horses and dogs, preserves and poachers, as if they were his only care. Valet John, again at his duties in the Rectory, is unaware that secrets have oozed from his lips, for Susy, when he meets her, affects entire unconsciousness, Benbow having given her a charge.

Out on the wild waters, kept as long as is needful under the effect of opiates, is the foreign gentleman's sick child. He has taken passage for himself and her in the second cabin. She is his daughter and they are in mourning for her mother. Chivers has a weeper on his hat. He shuns the rest of the passengers. The ship's physician is of opinion that Charity has a fever. When they are on blue ocean the child still remains, and now sea sick, in her berth, with one watching beside her, wishing that he were well rid of his burden, and almost determined to aid on the wearing ailment that preys upon the poor girl's frame.

Thus far shalt thou go, Jack Chivers and no farther. Between that little life and the ruthless hand that would extinguish its wavering flame, moves to and fro unceasingly an angel's keen but viewless blade.

The Rector has returned and is in deep mourning. The glossy sables become him well. He preaches the next Sunday in St. Winifred's and afterward administers the holy communion, this being a part of the church service, doing this, as he explains to Bumblefuz, professionally. Oh! casuistry of conscience, by which a man juggles himself into a careless dealing with sacred things. By this time too he has half reasoned his mind into a belief that his motives are those of pure philanthropy in providing a comfortable home beyond the waters for the Chivers' family. But the cookery is not right; a change must be made in the household. Even the haunch is less savory; it does not digest well; he has bad dreams at night; it must come of that careless cook; or that last port, which he selected himself, with Brandy Topaz the great wine-taster and connoisseur to assist his judgment,—that must have been kept back and an article of inferior quality smuggled in its place. Peter Styles is a poor man but he sleeps well. Bushwig is Earl of Riverside in expectancy with fifteen thousand a year, but he wakes in the morning with hollow eyes and a wild look.

All is not well with Bushwig; Dr. Bunblefuz remarks "Your liver needs stirring up, old fellow; calomel is the man for you; blue pill." The Rector determines when all is right at Riverside, to give up the living and go abroad. He inclines too in the way of the family failing and must drink to keep a steady hand. He is playing for a high stake but then the cards are sure. Being four by honors he must win. Does he not hold the game in his own hand?

There are rivers in America that rise in the clear streams of the high, northern latitudes, and, after a winding course of thousands of miles, disembogue their waters through turbid estuaries into the equatorial seas. Upon these great streams that wind their lazy length through deltas an hundred-fold vaster than that of the Nile, where all manner of rude and primitive craft, yclept, in frontier dialect, arks, flat-bottoms, dug-outs and broad-horns might be seen, forty years ago, floating through gigantic vistas of sycamore, oak and cotton-wood, the first steamer of those times made her appearance, puffing angrily, as if snorting defiance to the wild boatmen, and the wilder savages seen from time to time upon the banks. Steam was then, as applied to water navigation, in its earliest maternity, and this uncouth paddle-wheel, a sort of Titan Caliban, its first offspring on those floods.

Puffing and blowing, rheumatic and asthmatic in all its joints and passages, yet moving fearfully, to the untutored mind, with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, that pioneer of steamers jostled its way amidst snags and sawyers, broad-horns and flat-bottoms, to its destination. But when the vessel had passed it began to be considered a preternatural creation. Some spoke of it as a flying evil spirit of gigantic and gloomy form, foreboding the last judgment and the end of the world. Others looked upon it as a mighty marine monster, which had ascended from the ocean; and one wild settler declared it

to be so, to his certain knowledge, for, as he averred, it came ashore at night, opposite his clearing, made a fire to warm itself and burnt up all his fence rails.

The lazy stream of village gossip, now boiling in hospitable eddies round tea kettles, now tossing amidst all manner of floating driftwood at evening entertainments, now splashing up with jets of froth and foam before tripe and bacon shops, or seething like a great cauldron opposite the doors of hostelries or at the porches of Ebenezers, floats, like those New World rivers, many an uncouth and ill-proportioned matter. The broad-horns of politics, the dug-outs of petty scandal, the flat-bottoms of ecclesiastical discussion, and whole Noah's arks of odds and ends besides, drift with the current of opinion and pass away. But the strange story of the dead woman and the houseless orphan child, and the ghost on the green, the finding of the girl by Squire Deschamp's daughter, and then the arson of the coach-house and the disappearance of the little one in this mysterious way, put together, plank by plank, a thousand tongues hammering in the nails and squaring the timbers and loading the coals and oiling the machinery and getting all under way, forming at last a veritable steamer of speculation and wonder, puffed itself out into the seas and waters of Richmanstown-cum-Sloppery and was more than a nine days' astonishment to the county as well. Minor broad-horns, flat-bottoms, arks and dug-outs, with all their freight, passengers and crews, were left far in the wake of this steaming and puffing mystery. Wagge remarked aside to one of his brethren of the Ancient and Venerable Antediluvians, that "Even when king Rameses the Great disinterred the Sacred Brick from the Tower of Babel, and set all the wise men of Egypt to deciphering the hieroglyphics, and founded himself, with his own royal hands, the cities of Thebes and Ramsgate, as a perpetual memorial of the event to all generations, that the excitement could not have been

greater among the various Sultans, Satraps, Moguls, Emperors and other dignitaries of the ancient world." He proposed that an emblematical medal of pure britannia should be struck in commemoration of this wonderful series of events, and that they should begin a new chronological reckoning in place of the Julian period, commencing with the first hour after the midnight on which Aminadab Vampire saw the ghost.

Bumblefuz was heard declaring that this came, abduction, arson and all, from injudicious matrimony and a redundant population. Rectangle Brobose was confirmed in his favorite theory that the evils of these Isles can only be cured by a tax on foreigners. The widow Snuggles was moved to tears, but blushing when interrogated by her clerical lodger as to the cause of them, she averred that she would not tell why she wept, no, not for the world. When pressed afterward however to reveal the mystery, the occasion being opportune, she coyly consented, "She had thought, what if the Reverend Dapper Flummery should fall in love with her; and what if she should fall in love with the Reverend Dapper Flummery; and what if afterward they should marry and have a little girl; and what if the Reverend Dapper Flummery should be promoted to be Bishop of Bangolore in the East Indies; and what if he should send for her with the little girl to come afterward and be Mrs. Bishop of Bangolore; and what if they should land in Calcutta on a Christmas eve; and what if she should be taken ill from the fatigues of travelling, in the streets of Calcutta; and what if she should drop down without leaving any papers saying that she was Mrs. Bishop of Bangolore and that her little girl was the Bishop's daughter; and then what if one of those Mogul priests should bury her in a pagoda; and then what if her little girl should be left starving on the steps of the pagoda; and then what if there should come up a snow storm and her little girl should be

frozen in the streets, while the Brahmins and the Rupees and the Juggernauts and the rest of them kept Christmas night; and then what if her little girl should be picked up by the daughter of a Mogul and have her feet and her ears thawed and be fed with Christmas plum pudding till she began to get well; and then what if the Mogul's coach house should catch fire and her little girl be carried off, no one knows where, to be eaten up by junks, crocodiles or other wild beasts of the jungles,—what should she do to get her little daughter again?" The widow Snuggles had a feeling heart.

It is an ill-wind that blows nobody any good, as the Emperor Nero's coachman remarked when he lit his pipe with a coal from the burning ruins of the city of Rome. The disappearance of Charity Green drew a great concourse of people to see the Ale House by the road-side where her mother died, and the grave where her mother was buried, and the place on the green where the snow-drift was that she was found in, and the mansion that she was taken to, and the stables that were burned the night she was spirited away. John, the coachman, who found Charity Green, met Aminadab Vampire at the Green Lion, when the pottinger was narrating the story of how he saw the ghost to a group of admiring bumpkins. He told how the ghost came whirling out of a snow storm, and how he held a fiery globe that burnt red and green and yellow in one of his hands, and how he shook a chain that rattled, and how he picked up something white out of the drift, and how his horns had tips of fire upon their points like bog-lights, and how he passed away in another whirlwind and disappeared close to the garden-gate of the old mansion. Even Martha, the bar-maid, declared that she saw the same thing from the attic window, only the ghost that she saw had wings. There were two parties, the wingites and the anti-wingites, among the believers in the ghost. John was puzzled.

"Why," he said, "I was out there on the common and I didn't see any ghost there at all." The matter was growing mysterious. John continued, "Missus came down into the kitchen and said that she heard something wailing in the snow, and I must seek for it, as it might be a child. I lit a candle in the round stable lantern and put on my coachman's coat, with its big capes, and went as Missus bid, but I saw no ghost." John was obstinate in his disbelief. "I stooped down," he concluded, "and took up the little girl out of the snow. She was white as a little ghost-ess herself, and they were all the ghosts and ghostesses that I saw that night." John, honest fellow, did not know that he was the ghost himself.

The Forester came down from Riverside, rubbing his eyes as if just out of a sound sleep. Roger hummed and hawed with the rest, but he went carefully over the ground steady as a pointer, and had his own private thoughts. This was on his way to Liverpool.

CHAPTER XII.

YOUNG LOVE.

Good reader, venture with us, invisibly, into the drawing room at Wingate Hall: we may go back a night. Happy, sometimes fearful, privilege of the story teller, he can retrace the galleries of the past. Old Time for him reverses the hour glass and bids the sands run over again, be they sands of gold or sands of blood.

Marian is down stairs first. The Misses Bloomfield are still at their toilets after the drive; the old Squire is absent on business of the Parish; the good mother deep in the mysteries of the housekeeper's room.

Twitter, young canaries, in that gilded cage, shake out a new chorus of melodies from your merry throats. Master Canary, hop on your highest perch, draw up one foot into the feathers and stand jauntily on the other. Peer out with those round, cunning eyes through the shining bars. You seem interested, Master Canary.

Now, for all the dainty awkwardness and shame-faced beauty and innocent guiltiness of this world, commend me to two young lovers, with the unfledged birdlings of affection just chipping their shells within the breast. Charlie Bloomfield has kissed Marian's handkerchief night and morning ever since the ball, and Marian has hugged that wishful, timid, I dare not tell you look, which honest Charlie gave her as they parted, aye, she has hugged that glance like an amulet.

Master Canary in the cage yonder looks puzzled. He

whistles, as much as to say in our proxy, human speech, "Well, I never." Madam Canary hears the whistle, and her eyes twinkle through the bars on another perch, while she trills back "Twee wee, tweet-ee-wee-too-coo;" which is, being interpreted, so that he who runs may read, "Why, Hubbie, you foolish fellow, when you first came courting me, you stood on one foot and rustled your feathers, ogled with a side glance and acted generally in a very ridiculous manner, just as Charlie Bloomfield is doing now. But we wives have all the penetration."

Let us glance at Charlie, gentle reader, now that the canaries have made their comments, while the Misses Bloomfield are still at their toilet and the mamma of the Misses Bloomfield is yet deep in the mysteries of the house-keeper's room.

The widow Snuggles was a full-blown rose, we might say perhaps of the species commonly called the cabbage rose. Dear Marian is a rose of rarer sort, the very quintessence of roses; and yet not a rose, but only as our Tennyson sings,

"A rose bud set with little, willful thorns."

Charlie plucks up courage. Marian opens the door and enters in rustling silk robes, flowing in all their modern amplitude, around a contour that no fashion can make ridiculous. So lights the wild Swan, plummy and radiant, in some tropic fountain. Charlie knows that Marian is in the house, that she came home with his sisters, that she is in the room.—There is a faint, almost imperceptible odor of heliotrope, overpowering to him, borne to the sense all laden with the aroma of a guileless, loving heart. Charlie was never known to be awkward before, but he is now decidedly. Girls have more self-possession than boys in these matters. The wisdom of love is womans' wisdom, and, in the good time coming, who knows, we may have Queens

and Parliaments of Love, and Hymen again bear rule as in good King Saturn's golden days. Marian knows that Charlie is in love with her now. She only divined and hoped it before. Armed with this knowledge, beautiful conqueror, she glides up to the blushing, stammering boy, and with an easy grace assists the embarrassed tongue. Charlie will have to pay for this act of royal condescension yet; it will not do to presume upon it a second time.

"Trill—trill—trill—twee—twee," as much as to say, "Capital, well done, Marian Deschamps!" both the little canaries sing in unison. Like all good, married people, they chant, "Let Hymen flourish."

Charlie has found words, words of not much consequence, perhaps, mere nothings; but Marian sees in them a meaning of joy and poetry and young romance, deeper than even lay in Sibylline books and oracles. Words are the bubbles on the surface of the cup, but if the nectar of Elysium is in the draught, these very bubbles reflect a mystic rosininess of hue and break with a music that is half divine. Coy and blushing, now that her first boldness is over, the maiden droops the head. Her words are nothings, too, but nothings that live in memory, when, fading to a cloudy wrack, the stormy deeds of heroes, the great achievements that make nations wonder, float away and leave no trace behind.

The good old man sees his children's children's children; and then there is an invisible glory in his chamber; a great King has summoned him from across the waters to a marriage feast. For years he has not gone abroad beyond his grandson's house, but now is about to venture on a long journey, and tender kisses and imploring eyes may not avail to retain him in his accustomed place. As he prepares for that pilgrimage, names, long since out in cold, white marble, for their last remembrance, are upon his lips. Once more he is a gay youth, like Charlie Bloomfield,

and sits with his Marian in some tapestried or wainscoted parlor of the dim past. The very canaries that sang that night are trilling in his heart-ear. The very roses that she wore have bloomed again; aye, the very fragrance of those roses, mingled with the sweet one's honeyed breath, as by some precious alchemy, is wafted to him with an intense, prevailing fragrance; and now she blushes once more, as when, like this dear Marian of ours, she met him with her frank words and her confiding, happy smile. Old man, they are all young where thou art going, all young together at that golden marriage feast!

It is astonishing how gay and seemingly unconscious, though with hearts fluttering all the while, Charlie and Marian appear when the sisters come down stairs. O, carnival of happy hearts! Mary Bloomfield has a lover, too, *in futuro*. She, also, an airy butterfly of Love's Midsummer eve, is fluttering up to Hymen's torch light of pure nepenthe flame, that adds to the wings which fan its brightness an airier motion and a richer gleam. Young Brompton is here this evening; his father, also, one of the squirearchy. This is Charlie's friend. They were boys, and boated and fished together. They are boys in heart still, though grown to be young men, and now they are embarking on Love's golden river, in fairer pinnace each than that of old which bore Cleopatra and her maidens upon the dusky Nile. Hugh Brompton the younger is in love, and Mary Bloomfield is the lass. They are all merry together, and roguish Cupid chirps, while the canaries listen, and enjoy, invisibly the scene.

Do the good, who were lovers in past generations, lean out from their enchanted distance and scatter benedictions on such festivities as this? I conversed with Dr. Hartwell on the subject, and, with many an apt, well chosen sentence, the mild and venerable Rector, while the night waned around such charmed talk, gave utterance to his high

philosophy, and, as he spoke, I thought that the great Book, the mighty Book, glowed upon his study table with a more sacred lustre. "Yes," said the old man, and now the eyes brightened and the countenance kindled with an enthusiasm befitting so vast a theme, "yes, those Christian men and women who were here with us and are now beyond us, I doubt not, behold, with pure eyes, those things which are as nothings to our grosser sense. The lamps of love that are kindled here on earth are filled with quenchless oil for the festivities of paradise. Age after age but adds another zone to that all populous empire. As our dusty earth sustains mysterious relations to the glorious company of all the stars, so the young soul moves, in its orbit around the Sun of Love, amidst grouped and watching constellations of attendant spirits. Man is made with eyes to look upward to God, outward to nature and his fellows, and downward to the ranks and circles that follow after in the eternal round of being. The good of all ages are one family." "Not," added the reverend man, "that I hold in venturing with rash foot on such sacred mysteries. There is a woe pronounced against such as consult wizards and have dealings with familiar spirits; but the good are not familiars, they are as the angels of God in Heaven; and they behold us still as the stars watch the earth."

I think, especially since this time, that young lovers, like those we have left in yon wainscoted room, have, watching them, the loving who have gone before. Sure I am of this, that He who is the very life of all love is not far away from any of us, and that He takes delight in all mirth that is pure, in all joy that is innocent, in all happiness that comes from the desire to be good ourselves and to make others blessed.


I am old fashioned enough to believe, reader, as the Founder of our Holy Religion taught, that we have fallen, as a race, from a condition of primal innocency. To me the

sacred story of a *Paradise Lost* is more than a myth of old, barbaric ages. But when I behold young love, pure, unselfish love, reviving in human hearts, moving toward each other in the attraction of an innocent fondness, as with cherub's wings, I think that if anywhere linger any of the lost seeds of those Eden flowers they are springing in their breasts.

Marian was an old fashioned girl, and had learned the great lesson that selfishness is sin, and that the essence of all goodness consists in living for the well being of others. I now relate something concerning our dear Marian that I would that each true hearted girl who reads these pages may profit by. Not because Charlie Bloomfield was the heir of the fine old estate of Wingate Hall, not because he moved in manly beauty, the pride of many eyes, and not even because he cherished the tiny glove that she dropped as a precious talisman, did she feel toward him the first yearnings of a fond heart. In her brief seventeen summers Marian had learned, what many fail to discover in three score years and ten,—learned to believe and trust in the direct Providence of a protecting God, vowing also within her soul to keep his law and to walk in his statutes blameless. Fervid, tropical natures like this are dowered with a wealth of kindly emotion, which, when perverted, becomes a raging sea of destructive and stormy passion. She knew that her breast, fragrant to the lover's fancy as some Hesperian Island in a sea of living love, might hold, as she made good or bad use of Heaven's blessings, the dovelets that coo and murmur, or the serpents that sting and kill. The whitest saint who walks to-day on the shining mountains, the wildest fury who haunts the bad man's darkest dreams, stood once in youthful freedom on the same level ground of dormant or awakening sentiment. Marian has felt the bad struggling within her for pre-eminence, and, like a true girl, steadfastly resisting its invasions, has cherished

the germs of every incipient nobleness, and meekly owned that these springing qualities of good were sown and watered within her from a higher source and better power. Her heart inclines toward young Bloomfield, because, from the hour when the star of womanhood began to shine, she has gone humbly to Him who directs even the little sparrow in its flight, and besought Him to guide that heart, of more value than many sparrows, to its own true mate. She has besought Him to keep her from the deceitfulness of riches. Charlie is good and noble and she knows it. He remembers the poor, respects the old and is not ashamed to say that he venerates the precepts of his mild and gentle mother more than he fears the ridicule of gay and worldly men. Over such courtships no shadows may ever fall, or falling they come but to purify, and to prepare the two for more close heart-union, for kinder and more auspicious nuptials by and by.

To some the romance of courtship ends with the honeymoon. To others it is a sweet lyric poem, that weaves itself through all the life, and crowns the years with a perpetual festival. Charlie mused that night, long after the lights in Wingate Hall were extinguished, of this pure and lovely Marian, and sank to sleep with a whispered prayer for long and happy years of communion with her as his dear wife. He feels the craving which comes to every true and earnest man, the craving for one to fold, not alone in his visible and human bosom, but in the sacred places and sanctuaries of the soul's invisible life. Happy are they who learn from youth to bound the limits of desire within the golden marriage ring.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE PLOT THICKENS.

There were two claimants for the lapsed honors and the great estates of the Earl of Riverside under the entail. The will has now been proved in Doctor's Commons, nor can it be set aside. Dr. Bumblefuz, having accomplished his undertakings at Coddlington Green, has laid before the expectant Rector duly authenticated documents, certifying that a woman, identified as Martha Chivers, died of the small-pox at that place, leaving an unclaimed child, that this deceased also of the same malady, and that the gipsy had informed certain of her gossips, who testified to the matter under oath, that the young girl's name was Rose or Rosa. No importance was attached to the hints at the time, and the child was buried as a pauper at the expense of the parish in the church-yard of that place.

So far all favors the Divine. Bumblefuz, however, instead of receiving the five hundred golden guineas, has thanks for his courtesy, and a verbal promise of the reward, should the certificates be found sufficient to establish the identity of the parties. The physician swallows the pill, bitter as it is. He is not fond of pills, though he administers them to others, but still is comforted by the reflection that the Rector will soon be the Earl of Riverside, and a prospective patron. He looks forward to comfortable dinners at Riverside Hall, and an extension of his practice among the titled legs who may take their places under the Earl of Riverside's hospitable mahogany.

Guilt thrives. There is no trace of Charity Green. We left Marian Deschamps in dainty white, blushing on her pillow at Wingate Hall. Ill news flies apace. She wakes to learn in the morning that the little Christmas gift found in the snow has been spirited away. Her quick wit divines that there is a secret, and she resolves, when the first burst of womanly grief is over, that, cost what it may, no effort shall be left untried to recover the missing one. No hospitable inducements, no coaxing of the sisters, no wistful look in the eyes of the youthful lover can retain her another day in the old country house. There is a wild cry that seems to ring in the ears and two frightened eyes turned imploringly to hers. She must reclaim the child.

Peter Styles, by this time, has made himself the factotum of the household. The villager, as we have seen, is handy with the tool chest, can be trusted with crowns and guineas without fear of a misreckoning on his part, and now, for the first time in his life, has dropped into a place where his ready and varied faculties find appreciation and reward. The gate-keepers lodge neatly fitted up is set apart as the permanent habitation of him and his, and Mrs. Peter Styles is soon to be installed therein.

The gipsies are still on the wild heath and Peter has one more occasion to display his skill in bone setting. The unlucky boy has had another fall and the mother will only trust the poor man who refused the golden coin for an act of kindness. But Styles goes not alone. This time his young Master drives over in the gig and the gipsy tent sees two acts of benevolence where one only was solicited. It is no place for a crippled lad, the new year opening with a bitter January. Men even have been frozen to death on the bleak moors; so runs the gossip of the county.—The Bloomfields, like our friend and orator, Epaphroditus Wagge, are in favor both of outdoor and indoor relief. A cottage is found on a neighboring farm, and the gipsies

are installed in it till the warm weather shall set in. The ailing woman, for exposure and anxiety have done their work on her too, finds a thatched roof as a cover. Merrily burns the fire, roaring up the chimney as if it were some glorious salamander who shook his shining scales delightedly to find himself in his native element. There the crippled lad is left, with generous fare, warmth and shelter, to nurse the broken limb. The woman's heart is touched, and saying little, inwardly meditates kindness in return. Preach on Peter Styles, Wesleyan as you are; live out the brave words you have read in the old Book that your grandfather knew by heart before you were born; it carries a blessing with it, that Book. It is to be observed that Brother Nasal and Peter Styles have different ways of letting their light shine.


The great day, big with the destinies of Bushwig, comes at last. Safe from the dangers of the ocean Jack Chivers has landed in some American sea-port. Genius of Bumblefuz, thy great coat surely fell on repentant Jack, when he indicted the epistle which, by due course of mail, was received by the executors of the Riverside estate. The gipsy is penitent with a flourish. He extenuates the crime of the abduction of little Rosa by a recital of the wrongs that Sally Chivers received at young Robert Devereux's hands. Making a clean breast of it, so far as that first spiriting away is concerned, the narration will bear the strictest scrutiny. He deplores that the orphan heiress is not still at his command, and then proceeds to give the history of the fictitious one, minutely narrating the circumstances under which the woman Martha and the child perished at Coddlington, during his absence from the country. All this is worked up with an artist's cunning hand. He then describes how, on returning, he found her buried and the orphan as well. Compunctions of conscience, he says, prompts him to make this confession. He regrets that he had any hand in

the matter, and then, with an art that borrows the express livery of nature, concludes by cursing his fates that the child is dead, as otherwise, by the Earl's will he might have restored her and received an indemnity against prosecution for his offence and the ten thousand pounds besides; sufficient, as he adds, to make the family comfortable for life. A duplicate of this is mailed to the Rector, and, enclosed in it, an epistle relating to their more private matters.

With these papers in his pocket the Rector of St. Winifreds submits the case, and Sergeant Wildfire, his counsel, proceeds in due form of law.

Here a trifling difficulty presents itself where it is least expected. A Scotch cousin, many degrees removed, pleads a prior claim of succession under the entail. The case is complicated. The question to be decided is, whether under the peculiar wording of an instrument executed generations since, a sister's son inherits before the male heir in direct succession of the eldest son of the younger brother of the great-grandfather. In the meanwhile the executors retain possession. Bumblefuz must wait for his five hundred guinea fee, Jack Chivers for his ten thousand pounds. Our venerable friend, Dr. Hartwell, whispers to himself the verse of the old Puritan hymn,

God moves in a mysterious way
His purpose to perform :
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.



CHAPTER XIV.

TRANSATLANTIC SCENES.

Modern improvement, in its progress, now burrowing like a mole and tunneling its way through mountains, now leaping like some startled deer and spanning broad rivers with arches of a stately curve, leaves thriving villages and hamlets to attest its presence in all the states of New England. The stream before us, flowed, a century since, through forests almost inviolable, in their virgin seclusion. Then came the settler with his axe, planting his first crop of potatoes and Indian corn amidst the blackened stumps of the clearing and penning up his few sheep at nightfall against the prowling wolf. Here too the dusky braves made their last stand, and even now they say it is the red man's blood that comes up from the ground and purples and crimsons the painted autumn leaves. The primitive cabin has given place to the spacious and showy mansion. Already the old fences by the road side are gray with moss and the graves of the first settlers are marked, not by hillocks but by little hollows, while the slant headstones peel and blister under the rays of the fervid midsummer sun or the abrasions of the winter snow.

The village in sight, which, though considered old in this new country, is comparatively of but recent origin, was called Proutville by its founder. The first wooden tenements erected by his sturdy hands are still preserved in quaint contrast with their younger and more ambitious

Hercules Prout, whom his grand children now style their illustrious and distinguished ancestor, held the respectable office of major in the Continental army during the Revolutionary period. Too wise to exchange solid gold for the doubtful promises of an embarrassed commonwealth, and taking advantage of the universal depreciation of property which ensued at the termination of the war, he laid the foundation of what has since become for these regions an immense estate. Finding himself less vulnerable to the random shots of the blind archer than to Hessian bullets or Loyalist sword cuts, and becoming enamored of a spinster rejoicing in the name of Mehitable Ball, Hymen smiled upon his undertakings, and as wealth and honors multiplied olive branches made their appearance around his table.

An Oily Gammon of a man, discovering politics to be the road to distinction and here succeeding also, he became eventually the Hon. Hercules Prout, M. C., and a Militia General. The matronly Mehitable soon rose superior to the poultry yard and the home-spun gown. Bent equally with her spouse on founding a family, she soon visited the parson's wife on familiar terms, Clergymen in those days representing the aristocracy and standing at the apex of the social pyramid in the New England village. Now also her ambition discovered a new field of display as Presidentess of Dorcas and Foreign Mission Societies. Still ascending in the social scale the country wagon and family horse were supplanted by the carriage and its pampered pair, on whose emblazoned pannels shone the arms of the Prout family, derived by intermarriage from the ancient house of the Gudgeons. These were two gudgeons argent saltierwise displayed upon a trencher gules; the legend of this brave device being "We swim." Waxing ample with years and honors Mrs. Gen. Prout visited Europe, and returned, as became a traveled lady, enhanced in self importance by the reflected glory of all the titled dignity on which her

eyes had feasted during this memorable pilgrimage. Now began a second era in the family annals. Ephraim the coachman was dismissed from service on her return; being a captain of militia and vowing in high dudgeon that "He would be derved if he ever made such a tarnation goney of himself as to fix up like a brigadier ginerel, jist to drive Marm Prout about the streets."

The livery of the Prouts, designed by a Regent street costumer for a foreign house of distinction, was indeed a gorgeous affair. Upon the buttons an embossed gudgeon, silver gilt, spread his fins upon a crimson shield, proudly bearing in his mouth the motto "We swim." A new coachman was imported from the neighboring shores of Long Island to whom the livery shone resplendent, like a spick and span new suit of emerald, gamboge and vermillion to a featherless cock-a-too. Inducted into the yellow coat with green facings, the black hat with the gold band, the top-boots with the crimson tassels, the mountain of blue capes and the gorgeous armorial buttons, Pompey became henceforth the standard bearer of the rising honors of the Prouts.

The Hon. Hercules Prout is now

"One of the few immortal names
That were not born to die."

His biography, prefaced with a superb lithograph, occupies a conspicuous place in the seventeenth volume of the *Memoirs of Illustrious American Heroes*, and his picture, taken in the act of delivering his great speech on the nutmeg question, before the assembled magnates of the legislature of Connecticut, may now be seen by the enthusiastic admirer of statesmanship and eloquence in the public library of the town of Proutville.

Mrs. Gen. Prout patronised Dorcas Societies, as we have seen. Her tea was of the strongest and most delicate fla-

vor, her ham and sardines, her brandy peaches and raised biscuits of unimpeachable excellence and her table service not of the King Rameses order, in pure Britannia, but, as in her own pompous and stately manner she explained to assemblage after assemblage of guests, manufactured of Spanish milled dollars expressly melted for the purpose. Hide your heads ye emblematical goblets, and oh! ye Past High Mitres, be eclipsed and silenced. On the lid of the tea-caddy shone a gudgeon rampant. A gudgeon of solid silver mounted guard over the costly contents of the sugar bowl. The jeweled fingers that grasped the handle of the tea pot encountered the firm resistance of a gudgeon with glittering scales, while the generous decoction was poured through the foaming and gasping mouth of the foremost gudgeon of them all. The Hon. Mrs. Gen. Prout became, as the inscription upon her monument declares, "illustrious for her many virtues," the chief of these being, in the estimation of the Proutville gossips, the frequency of her entertainments, the raciness of her scandal and the strength and flavor of her tea.

Pompey, the coachman, was a character, though like many another man of mark unappreciated by his own generation. Tuneful Timmins is appreciated. His ode, in hot pressed octavo, dedicated by express permission to her Royal Highness Queen Kamehameha III., has made him immortal. He registers his name on the books of hosteleries in his travels. It is rumored that "Timmins is in town." "What Timmins: the celebrated Pie dealer of the metropolis?" A greater than the pie dealer. His pies are baked, to borrow a figure of the eloquent Nasal, in the ovens of the Muses, and garnished with sprigs of laurel from the cloud-capped pinnacles of Parnassus. It is known that Timmins is here. He is recognised by the portrait in the hot-pressed octavo. Ladies of a romantic turn of mind *flatten their noses* against the parlor windows when it is

rumored that Timmins, in stately attitude, is smoking a segar on the other side of the way. Extracts from Timmins' immortal ode appear that week in the town newspaper, prefaced with an editorial laudatory in pica leaded. The editor has seen Timmins. He has shaken hands with Timmins. Timmins has remarked that "He considers the newspaper press the very bugle in the lips of freedom, and the editors of the newspaper press a Macedonian phalanx marching in the vanguard of the age."

Our friend Pompey, the coachman, meekly wears the buttons. His brother Timmins, brother in the poetic guild, wears the laurels; yet Pompey, measured by opportunities, is the greater poet of the two. Having traveled in his romantic and adventurous youth, and dredged for oysters in Chesapeake Bay, and partaken of sumptuous viands, hoe-cake, hominy and broiled 'possum, with the ebony damsels of those foreign lands, he has become versed in the mysteries of banjo playing, and perhaps, when New England is old enough to be classic, some reminiscence of Pompey, the coachman, may dignify his name, and the story of the Exiled Troubadour of Abyssinia become a sacred and imperishable tradition. Who knows? Humor, if it is genuine, though it may be born in the veriest negro hut, becomes at last the guest of princes and sets palaces in a roar. Many of Pompey's songs, preserved in fragments along the wild shores of Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds, and on the plantations of Rappahannock and Appottomax, shall set up wandering minstrels yet, and white men shall black their faces to delight refined assemblies therewith. Pompey too, like Timmins, has sung of love. Let us contrast the poets; we stand up for Pompey. Now Timmins in his youth was smitten with the charms of Araminta Foozle. She, Araminta,—this was in her prime before artificial bloom replaced the faded roses,—was visible in brocade satin; a lap-dog followed her; she led him by a blue ribbon; he

wore, it being winter, a soft lambs' wool blanket upon his back; the canine gentleman piteously complained, in dog language, of frosted feet. Forgetful of satin, the elegant Araminta clasped him in her arms. Timmins beheld it. Cream-laid Bath post, all guiltless of spatters, held, next morning, the amatory strains which now are found in Timmins's first volume, "Sapphic Odes and Lyrical Pieces." We quote from the fifteenth edition:

A R A M I N T A .

Like an empress in thy state,
Thou didst pass by me of late,
Opposite the banker's gate;—
Araminta!

Pity moved thy gushing breast;
There the frozen lap-dog prest
Mournfully, and was at rest;
Araminta!

Would that I, thy chains who bear,
That extatic poodle were,
Lapped into Elysium there;—
Araminta!

What avails my poet's crown?
I expire beneath thy frown.
Darkly must I founder down,
Araminta!

Pompey too has had his love-passages, having, in his susceptible youth, melted before the tropical charms of the ebon damsels of Rappahannock and Appottomax. There is a poem extant, composed by him in the era of his love's young dream. Reader, be stately, be critical. Imagine yourself a paid contributor to the *Cosmopolitan Review*. A second brick has just been disinterred from the ruins of

the Tower of Babel. A Pompey of those times, when as yet Nile mud was soft and the plastic clay of the Euphrates had not yet hardened into stone, has taken some laurel or other sprig, and traced, upon that substitute for cream-laid Bath post, his lyric. Remember you are the paid contributor of the *Cosmopolitan Review*, and are to write an article on the comparative merits of the ancient and modern muse. Dry Pompey's poem in the smoke of these old centuries, and now read it and sing it too, and then for genuine nature measure it with the Sapphic ode.

D I N A H.

I poled my oyster boat aground,
And Dinah waiting dere I found.
Oh! lubly Dinah was a rose.
My banjo wanted to propose.

CHORUS.—Ob all de gals where I am gone
I winks at Dinah wid de turban on.

From massa's yard I stole a pig;
He tought it was a possum big.
We roasted him till he was black
And floated him in apple jack.

CHORUS.—Ob all de gals where I am gone
I winks at Dinah wid de turban on.

I courted her dat Sunday night;
Her cheeks were black, her eyes were white.
I popped de question in de dark.
De chimney tought he see um spark.

CHORUS.—Ob all de gals where I am gone
I winks at Dinah wid de turban on.

De 'bacco plants began to sprout
But Massa Brown ob funs was out.
He sold my Dinah far away
De week afore de wedding day:

CHORUS.—I courts no gal since she am gone
But winks for Dinah wid de turban on.

Three generations have seen the Prouts of Proutville a rising family. Hercules Prout, major in the continental army, is rapidly becoming historical like any Black Prince or Richard Plantagenet. The place where he captured the Hessian Lieutenant, who, with his six men, surrendered at discretion, they having supped heartily that night on sour-kroot till their systems became weakened and indisposed in consequence, is still pointed out to the traveler, and a brick monument has been erected in place of the original obelisk of painted pine that marked the spot. It is a glorious privilege, this of having ancestors. Noadiah Prout, the Prout of the second generation, has added new dignity to the Prouts of Proutville. Inheriting Mehitable's shrewdness and her regard for the family buttons, he has built himself a castle which he calls Belfont. It is a stately edifice of the composite order of architecture, embellished with octagon towers and a huge doorway, over which appear the armonial bearings of the Prouts. His excellency Noadiah Prout is now retired from public life, in which, rising through all the gradations of distinction, he became ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary at the court of Dusseldorf. He is now styled in private by his friends "the Ambassador." Having a taste for the fine arts, he has founded a picture gallery embellished with productions of the old masters, all warranted originals; among others the Smoked Ham and Flitch of Bacon, by Gerard Dow, and Murillo's celebrated master piece of The Boy eating Muskmelons. The Prout gallery is, as all travelers are informed, the finest collection of paintings in the New World.

Pwetah, coachman at Belfont, honors the Prout livery of the third generation. The ancestral ebony is in him faded to a rich chocolate color, or Van-dyke brown. Pwetah is a wag, and inherits the musical voice without the poetical inspirations of his ancestor, Pompey the Great.

Ancestor Pompey dredged for oysters in the waters of the Chesapeake. Descendant Pwetah dredges for oysters also, in the capacious depths of a huge silver turreen. Pwetah keeps pace with the advancing refinement and nobbishness of the Prouts of Belfont. Pwetah despises apple jack and prefers crab juice sweetened with sugar of lead, and labelled Sillery Mousseux. Pwetah drives the family carriage on state occasions in white kids.

On what trivial and insignificant matters, at least in seeming, hinge the joys and sorrows, the successes and misfortunes of mankind. Pwetah, the coachman, drives out the ancient Ambassador on a sunny afternoon in June. The off horse casts a shoe, and Jackson, prime favorite of the stable, goes lame. Pwetah reins up to a country smithy, and there a piteous object disfigures the wayside with her loathsome presence.

Once old Neeshema,—this was more than half a century since,—went brave in scarlet blanket, and blue broadcloth leggings and dainty moccasins garnished with beads of all the colors of the rainbow. Rum, abuse, and who knows what wild passions, have done their work since then. The Indian chief, her great grandfather, beheld this fertile valley all his own. His lodge stood upon the site of Belfont. Over these mountains rang his war whoop. The other day, in ploughing a new fallow, they unearthed a brass kettle, a heap of arrow heads and a tomahawk, rusted with age, and with them a mass of mouldering bones. Around that grave his dusky people bewailed their mightiest warrior and sage, with solemn rites, a century and a half ago.

Neeshema sees the carriage of the Prouts drive up, and half crazed with drink, shakes her skinny finger at the Ambassador. "Ugh! Him big pumpkin." Neeshema is wild to-day. Drink maddens her. She was an Indian beauty in her youth. Can that mass of deformity ever drop its hideous bulk, and a radiant, rosy angel come therefrom?

We shall see that too. Neeshema is wild, but there is one who can tame her: CHARITY GREEN. Lazily the Ambassador reclines in his carriage, too indolent to move, while Jackson regains the missing shoe. Neeshema was right; he leans there like a round and jolly pumpkin, basking and fattening in the August sun.

Beauty that is merely extrinsic, the beauty of buxom country lasses and gracefully made up young ladies of cities and villages; beauty that lives but in the momentary peach-bloom of the countenance, in the contour of a well shaped person, in the rounded arm and the neat ankle,—this beauty is sadly dependent on creature comforts. Where the frame is the heart of the picture it requires goodly gilding and a well chosen light. But there is a loveliness which depends not on the body, which triumphs to reveal itself where want has pinched the features and poverty is betrayed in ill adapted and worn attire, where trouble has etched its deep shadows and the eyes are half brightened half darkened with a glory that is more intense and a gloom more fearful than the children of the senses ever know. Genius is of every condition: may we not say superior to all conditions? and genius is always beautiful so long as it remains unstained in the quality of its nature. The Soul that feels its mounting faculties, and realizes its kindred to the Essence and the Life which moves in all the beauty that weaves the flying rainbow above the chasms of the storm and makes the very fabric of the world a jeweled tissue akin to the celestial lustres,—the Soul that, when the evils of outward circumstance come upon it, builds a stately castle for itself on sunny slopes that open to the morning, and lives therein, with Faith and Hope and Love and Prayer and sacred Chastity for bower maidens and companions,—that Soul can imprint its own most real grace on features which care has left his mark upon,—can invest the body,

otherwise but a fragile, half-broken reed, with the sacred semblance of an immortal spirit.

The essence of genius is love. Talent is of the understanding, but the intuitive, nobler faculty that divines rather than speculates, and so comes in contact with God's wonder work of nature in its hidden chambers where the artist conceals the chef d'œuvres of His skill, is of a nobler province in the mind. Wherever the capacity for love exists in a degree, which, to those unacquainted with the deeper elements of being, seems preternatural, it flowers through the intellect in the untold splendors of a vast imagination. Though neither the intellect or the affections are creative in themselves, yet, when united in a balanced and harmonious nature, the result is character, fitted for original and independent action and governed by some divine law. In somnambulism the mental faculties become almost transparent, and, like apartments filled only with mirrors, they reflect in every direction the unconscious sentiments that rest within the depths of being. The poet, whether in words, in colors or in marble, touches very nearly, by the peculiarity of his organization, upon this dream ground and holiday chamber where the liberated faculties delight to revel. Imagination is born of emotion, though Fancy may be but an intellectual gleam.

The life of this dear wanderer, whose path we trace, though squalid and melancholy as to its surroundings, had been to her more than a Greek Idyl for the past five years. Adapting herself to circumstances as the swan does to the wild billow, trouble and grief had been but able to weave a flying romance into the days and seasons. Driven to seek within her own soul sources of hope and comfort, she had found there something more than herself. "There is," says an old writer, "a chamber in the virgin breast where the gods make their tabernacle." One steadfast faith burned

like the holy flame of the Parsees in the center of consciousness, faith in the Unseen, Omnipresent Friend.

Even while that pale face, worn with early suffering, met the eyes of the gipsy as they tossed upon the Atlantic, it began to haunt him, to rouse troublous thoughts within his breast, as it had also moved the proud Rector of Richmans-town that Christmas night.

On the eastern side of Long Island, scooped out by the beating surf of ages, a deep bay with here and there an islet supports from the products of its waters a few wild, half savage fishermen. The curlew, the gull and multitudes of shore birds haunt these rocky islands. The weather-beaten rocks abraded by the ocean currents display fantastic chasms, and here at low tide the naturalist discovers the fairest treasures that Flora nurses in her water world. The blue fish, the sheepshead and the Spanish mackerel repay the labors of the adventurous angler, and melancholy tales are told of vessels wrecked upon these bleak, inhospitable sands.

Here, after a roving life of about two years, domiciled in the steading of a rude and ignorant family, dividing their labors between the fisheries in the bay and the culture of the arid soil, the gipsy outlaw found secluded lodgings for the child. At first, during rare intervals, he paid a flying visit to this remote locality, but soon the eyes that haunted him before grew deeper, and darker, and brighter, and gifted with a power to flash strange radiance into his breast, where many a cruel secret lay waiting to be called up to judgment: then he ceased the visits altogether, contenting himself with a reply to his quarterly letter acknowledging the receipt of the mere stipend allotted for her maintenance and the information that the girl was doing well.

Fortune did not favor the gipsy in the States. The thousand guineas melted and took the way of all ill-gotten gains. When therefore adventurous men, excited by the

discovery of the Californian El Dorado flocked there in eager thousands, Chivers was among the first. Failing after a time to remit to the entertainers of his stolen prize, the scanty kindness meted out till now gave way at first to cutting inuendoes, then to hardships, finally to severe tasks and even blows. Growing rapidly as her twelfth summer dawned, and becoming less and less able upon such coarse fare as was afforded to fulfil the labors of a drudge, led too perhaps by the mysterious Providence that shapes our ends, she fled to an Indian family, the last of the proud race, that, when the white man came, ruled over the fertile vallies of the Connecticut. Accustomed from early gipsyings to the Bohemian tent the Indian wigwam seemed no unpleasant shelter. The unchartered liberty of fields and floods was found a blessed change from monotonous, in-door toil. That sweet and beautiful nature, that no poverty could rob of innate grace, no want make abject, with youth's own elasticity to help it on, began ere many months to put forth new and nobler traits. The uncouth aborigines with whom she was sheltered felt the subtle spell and murmured that she was no white man's daughter, that eye so keen, and foot so light, and fingers so nimble in basket weaving, and hand so dexterous with the paddle, were never born in the wigwam of the pale face; that she must have been stolen from some great nation of their own kind far away, and was a favorite of Gitchee Manito, the Great Good Spirit. Passing and repassing over the narrow frith that divides Long Island from the main land it was now her lot to be in company with the oldest squaw of the little handful that had once been a tribe. From their camp near the sea-shore, they had ventured a short distance inland, for the purpose of disposing of the gay colored baskets by the sale of which in good part their living was supplied. Here we meet our treasure.

"Ugh! Big Pumpkin him," cries Neeshema, shaking once more her skinny finger at the Ambassador. But whence

that flute-like voice, rich, mellow, as if some lady mother had dreamed of nightingales, and gathered in their mellifluous lays to feed the little one sleeping upon her breast?

"Hush, granny! hush!" answers Charity. "Let us go home."

There are no canaries to criticise this scene. The linnet and the starling, the skylark and the thrush have no rest in these majestic elms, no place in these painted maples; but the young girl's voice is sweeter than any song of birds. It is that voice, that human voice, which, more even than the eye, betrays the secret that the frail dust of the body harbors a concealed immortal. With some the soul-music is lost in tortuous channels of the senses; with others, perverted to a wild jargon by the stormy force of passions; but here it found its way, a bright river rippling to outward air, touching human hearts in spite of themselves, rousing even the worldly man grown indolent with honors and prosperity.

The pompous dignitary in the carriage gave way for a moment to the impulse imparted by the voice. "Pwetah."

Pwetah, by this time was mounted on the box with that grandiose air which says, "Behold these buttons. I represent the honors of the Prouts of Belfont. My chocolate-visage vails from sight the mighty countenance of the family's guardian genius. I condescend to drive this fat old fellow about for the benefit of his health." Pwetah is spoiled by long-continued feeding on the costly remnants of great feasts, and looks down with contempt on "Dese ere poor white folks," with triple contempt on drunken red skins. Yet Pwetah stops, for evidently the Ambassador is in earnest, and stands at the carriage door expecting some occasion for his services.

"Peter, call that young girl here." Pwetah has been accustomed to no such menial offices. Partaking in the *general snobbishness* of the family, he despises "trash,"

but nevertheless obeys gruffly, turning with a loud call, "Hallo, you gall!"

Look at those eyes. The frightened fawn has imparted their intensity and timidity, but the lioness flashes through them now. The color kindles in the insulted cheek. The maiden turns and looks at the menial. He is cowed by the glance. The girl is poorly clad, and little better than a beggar, and he displays the buff and green, the white kids and heraldic buttons, yet Pwetah droops his head. One glance of a human eye, with sorrow and love and genius, with all the unfathomed soul gazing through it, is the only answer that dull and earthy natures ever should receive. The theory of the materialist perishes in their consuming fire like paper in a blaze.

Charity is standing at a little distance, hushing down, with musical, tender voice, the half-crazed Indian's drunken rage. The negro takes off his hat unconsciously, and recovers himself to say, with a polite bow, "Miss, Massa Prout would have the honor of addressing you. He is in the carriage."

There are heads painted by Titian, which one even now may see in ducal galleries, of those highly-colored Venetian women, who, beautiful in youth, exhibit, as age creeps on, a parchment-hue, seamed with scores of wrinkles, in each a strong passion leaving its memorial. Frame this face of Neeshema in quaint old carvings; let a sombre back ground replace this brilliant, almost Venetian sky, and one might imagine that he beheld an original of the master. Slowly have years, full of trouble, full of heart-wreck, and then of reason almost lost in wild anarchy, obliterated from the face the lineaments originally painted there by that Infinite Artist whose pictures are the earth and the heavens and the human soul. But still there is a something left which betrays through all this waste and ruin, that God's handiwork was here. The blood of a hundred generations of

wise and valiant Sachems, of chiefs foremost in battle, and around the council fire most sage, slowly stagnates to its last decay, yet still the old eye is keen to detect the workings of a high nature as it confronts a servile mind, and Nee-shema mutters as the maiden turns toward the carriage of the Ambassador, "Ugh, she scare de nigger. Wonder what Big Pumpkin wants wid de wild rose. He be civil, or she scare him too."

Big Pumpkin is civil, and yet, having given way to his impulse, is at a loss what to say next. As the shy, graceful one approaches, and the cheeks flushed with rich color, and the long eye lashes that conceal those melancholy eyes, and the high brow carved as if from some classic statue, meet his gaze, the old man's heart is touched. Does he remember a little daughter of his own, who died years ago about that age? Does he remember how her eyes grew deep and beamy, her cheek bright with unearthly crimson, her voice as if it were mingled with chimes and echoes of another land; and then that last hour when she seemed less to die than to glide into rare silence, and so become more beautiful in the halls of memory than when her earthly charms were in their earliest, unwithered prime? Does he remember? Roused from languor as the interest grows more deep, the heart more active, his manner is also deferential. "Miss;—" he goes thus far and then pauses as if for the word; but something in the accent, the gesture, vibrates upon the sensitive memory of the lonely girl; the mild eyes overbrim with tears.

These grave and dignified old gentlemen, who can smile, with a good-humored jest, to find themselves denounced in the newspapers, and who never dine the less heartily for being styled Aristocrats and Catalines and plunderers of the public by opposition orators, melt sometimes at a little tear. The Ambassador's pet grandchild pouts with her red lips, and dissolves a twinkling diamond in the corner of her

eye, and grandpapa buys that pacing poney before Fairy has time to form a new wish or forget the last one. But these tears are of a deeper spring, salt drops from a wild, breaking ocean of sorrow within the breast.

"Come, come," murmurs this patriarch of Prouts, "let me provide for you, my child. It is better to share in the kindness of those who will gladly help you than to wander with these savage folks. You are not theirs by birth. It is wiser to be at school than to pass the time in weaving baskets."

The sentiment of duty, of duty to others, is the granite rock on which all nobleness is built. Very sweet to Charity was this proffered kindness. An English home, whence she had been spirited by the gipsy outlaw, shone out once more, a clear picture. John, the coachman, bluff and genial in all his British manliness; Molly with her cheery look and beamy, blushing face; the grave and quiet Matron, Mrs. Portman; and, center and queen of this group, Marian herself, the beautiful protectress; the fire in the grate and tabby on the hearth rug; books with gaily colored landscapes where lovely ladies and stately gentlemen and happy children seemed to move like angels in some golden paradise; the sweet words, the gentle kisses and the tender, sacred prayers,—they all came forth. At one wave of that starry wand, Memory, the enchantress, transported the dreamer to the one blessed place of rest in her young life's dreary journey. Then come the thought, Oh, joy! once again to find the wonder-land of books; the love-land of caressing words and precious smiles; and Oh! more awe-inspiring than books, more comforting than the kisses that make the young heart glad, to be taught by holy men and women, learned in the high mysteries of the Book which contains revelations of the One Friend who never, never had failed to soothe, when sorrow was the wildest and grief the stormiest,—deep felt in the heart of hearts.

But the young girl was firm. No! Duty to others before happiness to herself! When adopted into this rude Indian family, had she not made a vow within her own breast, to repay kindness with kindness? Had not Neeshema already begun to wean herself from the habit which was wrecking reason and rapidly destroying life? Was not the aged squaw almost abandoned by her half breed son, and unable, without the slender assistance that she might afford, to eke out a supply for her simple wants. Had not the old Indian, when she first went among them, overtasked and heart-heavy, tenderly cared for her with cunningly administered simples, waking to watch by night, and supporting her feeble steps by day? Leave Neeshema! And now the young soul was firm as if the spirit of a hero lived within the breast. No! The Indian mother should not be deserted in her old age.

Wearily, the Ambassador, when other amusements fail, yawns over the highly wrought romances that call to him "Come read me" from the library shelves. To him they are but "stuff," and "only fit for girls." But this touch of nature kindles a latent fire that has smoldered while years and honors have gathered about him.

Pwetah, at a respectful distance, holding the impatient horses, looks and wonders at the colloquy. Ancestor Pompey would have comprehended it at a glance, but the coachman sees in it a subject only for blind wonder and a bit of gossip in the kitchen on his return. The fire which the good genius has fanned in the bosom of this pampered son of fortune flashes up now into a bright blaze. He thinks of a cottage on the estate, once occupied by a tenant, and bordering on a clump of ancient woodland, the very gem for picturesque beauty of his domains. This he will furnish and make comfortable. Here Neeshema shall have a home, their slender wants amply provided for. Early in the ensuing week this brave and noble girl, whom

his heart yearns toward, shall find herself well clad and with the three worlds which her spirit hungers after opening their charmed dominions; the world of literature, the world of kindness, and, greater than all, the world that dawns through the book that came from heaven, the world that shall survive when earth's huge empires are but a bubble that the wave has washed away. Simple as was this act of kindness, old man, yet, when the Prouts of Belfont are forgotten, it may stand in your favor written in the archives of that other country, where history never lies.

CHAPTER XV.

THE GOLD HUNTERS.

The stream which we behold dashing rapidly, now whirling in turbid eddies, now beating round huge boulders, now darting at a tangent, in straight lines, opening out through chasms that seem in the beginning to have been split by earthquakes, is called Feather River. Flowing westward, it inclines toward the great Pacific. This is a lonely place; far as the eye can travel not a solitary habitation meets our sight, if we except one weather beaten tent. The time is morning; the sun has scarcely risen, yet three men within the waterproof domicile sit round a table, made of four stakes driven into the ground with a rough hewn slab placed upon them. A tin coffee-pot gives forth its grateful steam. The table furniture consists of three tin trenchers, on each of which is a ration of bacon broiled black upon the coals, and a solitary mug, out of which they drink alternately. Besides the bacon, hard biscuit is their only fare.

The morning repast being over, two of the gold hunters, shouldering pick, spade and rocker, plod to their digging in the neighboring ravine. It may not be unprofitable to listen to such chance words as may drop from them. Evidently their conversation relates to a robbery which has occurred at the residence of our old friends, the Bloomfields, Wingate Hall. As we shall have occasion to meet these worthies again, it will be also well to have a glance at their appearance.

Hair, originally dark chestnut, but now inclining to a grizzle, a countenance where evidently intellect dominates over the coarser passions, but is in its turn swayed solely by the more subtle evils that lurk in the chambers of an abandoned heart, eyes keen as the hawk and equally far sighted in search of prey, a temperament in which the bilious-nervous preponderates, an aspect at once shrewd and sinister, and a wiry, athletic body, that seems not to have decayed in Satan's service, but rather to have toughened and indurated, keeping pace with the corrosion of the conscience and the hardening of the heart, distinguish the first. He is called Cunning Joe.

The reddish beard, the florid complexion, the careless, half jovial, half dare devil look of the other, bespeak a character less hardened, less confirmed; but still, though it may be that the embers of the fire which the Divine breath kindled still smoulder, like a brand on the hearth of a ruined household, yet voice and manner indicate that soon, if desperate courses are persisted in, the soul will petrify and become hard as the nether millstone. Apparently too this man has resorted to crime as a profession, has made hits, met with adventures and had lucky escapes from the myrmidons of the law. Yet, while the fertile mind is teeming with the ill shaped knowledges which make up the wisdom of the rogue, he is less built to plot than to execute the plans of others. We shall find him hereafter rejoicing in the soubriquet of Handy Ben.

Evidently the two are conversing on a subject in which they are deeply interested. "He left England after we did," remarks the elder of the two, speaking of some confederate, "being concerned in the burglary at Wingate Hall. Young Bloomfield showed fight. They floored him with their knuckles, but he came to time, and alarmed the house. They managed to be off with seven hundred pounds of swag, bank notes and guineas, and a great sack of

the old family plate. Finding the old country too hot to hold him after this, he made tracks for the States. I found him on the lay there, and got him to join me in this here enterprise."

"There is many a queer cove hereabout. Old Benbow, him who was turned out from being gamekeeper down there at Riverside, came up tother day. The old chap says he smells gold, and is bound to be in at the death, if it has as many turns as a fox. The chap who was the whipper-in of the hounds is here too, he being turned out the same time. Parsons, and such like prigs, says, that 'honesty is the best policy.' Now, there's you and I, and our pal, Jack Chivers, we have taken out of a hole or two five hundred ounces of the stuff between us, and have the prospect of ever so much more. We are nobbs, we are. What has old Benbow got for being honest? He never cracked a ken, but here he is, seedy and down at the mouth. Had he been a good cracksman he might have been as well off as we are."

As the two plod on their way they are overtaken by the third. A roving life and a career of dissipation begin to leave their impression on Jack Chivers. The crow's feet are formed about the eyes; the sensual mouth, that once might have been called handsome, begins now to drop at the corners like that of a hound. Still he is an athletic man; more robust than when we saw him last; more formed in manner. The voice has grown husky, and he speaks as if he had learned that tones and accents were to be guarded no less than words. Evidently the bad man's wisdom, which comes with years, is fast ripening within the brain, fast shaping to itself a chamber of imagery within the breast.

Urged on by the love of excitement, the passion for novelty, the thirst for gold, and the hope of winning some sudden prize that will enable him to indulge in expensive

pleasures, he is delving desperately into this auriferous soil.

As they speed with brisk steps toward the scene of their morning labor they still continue in conversation concerning the robbery at the Bloomfields. We infer from this that the housekeepers' room was entered after the family had retired, by one who was familiar with the premises, and that suspicion fell immediately afterward upon one Peter Styles, a man of all work about the place. On searching the gate keeper's lodge, in which he had apartments, a mask, a bludgeon and a dark lantern were discovered, of which he could give no satisfactory account. On measuring his hob nailed shoes it was ascertained that they tallied with one pair of the footmarks left in the garden bed beneath the window at which the burglars had made their way in. It was proved that Styles, the evening before, had been talking in the lane with a man who was identified with a band of desperate fellows, and who had been engaged in burglaries before. This man was traced to London but there lost sight of and it was supposed that he had left the country.

Styles was remanded by the justices on suspicion, but was bailed out; and this was the unaccountable part of the story, young Bloomfield and the son of rich Squire Brompton stood his security, though the bonds were fixed at five hundred pounds; but Styles after being liberated fled from trial and his bailmen paid the forfeit.

Handy Ben sniggered and grinned while the old burglar narrated these particulars and at its close, with a knowing smile, dropped the remark, "I took a share in that ere transaction myself. It was a gipsy lad as left them ere tools in the lodge. The soft feller tried to make a Methody of him; blast him; he used to get on his marrow bones every night and scare the feller by talking about the devilkins. That ere chap as you knows about came up to see what

could be done, so we sent the boy up to the lodge and got him to be kept there over night. After the cove's amens was over and he said a blessin' our chap went to roost in the loft, slipped down in his stockings, found his mud hoppers and put 'em on, unlocked the lodge gate and went with them to the window of the housekeeper's room, where they was to break in. Then he came back and went up to the roost again and was there snoring sound asleep when the alarm was given. That's how they came to suspect the Methody."

"What became of the chap afterward?" inquires Chivers. Handy Ben answers, "No one knew. The Squire and his sisters tried to keep his wife and child in a cottage on the place, but the old Squire raged and turned them away. Then old Squire Deschamp's daughter gave them both shelter against everybody's advice, and Squire Bloomfield vowed that none of his daughters should ever cross her doors again."

Depravity in some natures has a hot-house growth; one year does the work of scores. With others the foul plant matures more slowly. This lad, whom we now hear spoken of as having been the means of almost transporting a benefactor and of blackening his fair name beyond the hope of retrieval, of separating him from his family and causing wife and child to become dependent on the world's mercy, is the very youth on whom we saw Peter exercise his gift of bone-setting five years ago. Those five years have ripened the lad of sixteen into the stout fellow of twenty-one. From liming trout brooks and robbing hen roosts, taking rapid strides in his profession, he now boasts of burglary, yet circumstances were in his favor. The woman, his mother, was not without the elements of generosity. A good man befriended him when illness, winter and poverty made the young blood run chill. For him devout lips expounded the precepts of the One who comes to every

human heart with golden promises of a home in the better country, where faithful virtue meets with its reward. He has sown, and will also reap.

That morning, when as yet the eastern skies were gray and dim, there was an accession to the number of the miners on the bars of Feather river. Not passing the dormitory occupied by the early rising three with whom we have parted, and all-unconscious of their proximity, he makes his appearance, driving an ill-conditioned mule, bearing two hampers, a sack and the materials for a canvas tent. The mule is tethered and the tent pitched before the sun has risen. As we gaze upon the face of this last adventurer a certain twinkle in the eye, a frank and genial expression in the countenance, a peculiar squareness of forehead and handiness of limbs betrays a former acquaintance, whom we first met wearing an emblematical waistcoat and sharing in the sumptuous repast, provided for the annual convocation of the Grand Consolidated Order of United and Venerable Antediluvians, in the banqueting room of the Green Lion. The new comer, Phil Bulwinkle, as he calls himself, though we will take the liberty of an introduction as Peter Styles, is apparently bent on a manful day's work, reconnoiters the ground with a quick eye, stakes out his claim according to miner's law, and makes himself as much at home as circumstances will admit.

The three first comers that day took out forty ounces, and, after twelve hours of successful labor, returned at night fall to their evening meal of coffee, rum, bacon and ship's bread. Phil Bulwinkle saunters in, discovering neighbors close at hand, with a hearty greeting, but soon, not finding himself among congenial associates, retires to his solitary resting place. Though an absconder from justice, with circumstantial evidence black against him, he sleeps the calm sleep of an honest man.

Agon ago, on plains more bleak and desolate than these,

and yet beneath the same unchanging heavens, and yet surrounded by the providence of the same All-potent Benefactor, with only a stone for a pillow, an eastern youth lay down and dreamed a dream. Incorporated into Holy Writ that vision lives in every tongue, and myriads of eyes have closed since then to peaceful slumber, in lonely journeys and upon undiscovered seas, thinking, as the senses became obscure and the quiet heart grew still, of the mystic ladder, and the angels ascending and descending above the Bethel stone.

This houseless wanderer has no stone for a pillow, but in his breast is a time worn volume, a wife's parting gift, where all that wondrous vision, in the Divine hand, is written for the soul to read; the book that finds a voice to speak to man though tongues have ceased and knowledges passed away, the book that utters its precepts with a still small voice, yet nerves the soul to deeds that echo through the ages with the tramp of heroes. The broad moon rolled up, he read a chapter of its contents by that pure silver light, and knelt in prayer as the confederates in the other tent, with foul words and sharp curses, were thumbing the well worn cards and finishing their game.

He is lonely here; thoughts of the dear wife, in her distant resting place, and the young child who asks "When will father come back?" till the mother sobs, and, speechless, strains the little one to her aching heart; temptations, perhaps besides, from the subtle Enemy, to doubt God's providence and curse his fate and die; temptation battled against and overcome with a sharp spasm of agony, when he calls to mind the One, who, forty days and nights a hungered, wrestled with the destroyer, and so opened the gates of Heaven to his followers, and gave them strength to overcome all things, and at last, in dying to become immortal;—thoughts growing indistinct and tender, and melting away in the peace which this world cannot give, come and

throng and pass and vanish, as the worn frame finds repose.

Does he dream? See how the lines of sorrow disappear and a placid look succeeds like that of an eternal infancy; such a look as rests on the faces of good men when the death agony is over and the soul gone home; the look that betokens, that even in sleep, the spirit drinks from some invisible fountain divine refreshment, and gathers strength and courage for the coming day.

Yes, he dreams. A sweet whisper from the Prayer Answerer takes form in the pictured house of the imagination and mirrors itself on the closed eyes in images of hope. Once more he is without a stain upon the character and honest men are not ashamed to take him by the hand in broad daylight, and call him friend. The prim-roses are blooming in the gardens and the sweet cowslip comes up to mingle its delicate perfume with the tender freshness of the springing grass. It is the tender gloaming and the hedge rows, as he passes up the lane that leads to the gate keeper's lodge, are scented with the budding haw. The steps are languid, but he feels that work is over and that happiness is near at hand. There is no one nigh to observe his coming. The red sunset has gathered in its glories and dropped below the west. He approaches the cottage, leans for a moment against some support, and presses his hand upon the heart to steady its beating. The white curtain, half undrawn, reveals a little maiden sitting at her mother's knee. On that mother's lap the Book is resting, but now, as the daylight wanes, and the fire crackles, and the shadows begin their elfin dance, she muses. Then, a little moment, and startled, she listens; a footfall has touched some nerve in the ear that vibrates deep into the place of memory.

Still flow on, thou blissful dream. His little daughter now is in the mother's lap. The cherub lips are put out

for another and another kiss; and then his hand is on the door-latch; and then the white arms are around his neck again, while the little one whom he parted with as a babe dances on the floor and clings to mother's gown, and wonders at that long, that still embrace, and then bursts into cheerful, merry laughter, "Father has come home; father has come home!"

Day breaks, heralded in the east by floating flakes of light. Gently as a bird that stirs upon its perch, preens its wings, carols its little note, and then is gone, this honest man revives from slumber. He has slept well; the dew of hope is fresh upon the heart.

The unrisen sun yet delays its coming; but now once again the tattered volume comes forth from within the coarse folds of the miner's shirt. The treasure seeker looks within its pages, forgetful of California, as he hears a message from the undying land; and, as he reads, the words more precious than jewels of untold price, impart to him that strength which bread alone cannot supply. The talisman is returned to its hiding place. Well does he remember whose hand placed it there, when, bidding him farewell, she said: "Peter, I know that you are innocent, though esteemed guilty by the world. Trust in Providence; never forget in that far-off land that God is still with you." The treasured volume, bound like an amulet to his heart from that time, had been a constant comfort; but now a sentence often read before seemed to rise up out of its pages and talk as if it had a living voice: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee."

"Sure enough," mused the lonely man, "I be in the waters now;" then, kneeling, the deep voice melting to a woman's tenderness, implored His blessing who is able to still the seas of trouble let them roll as wildly as they may. As he arose, a marvellous calmness possessed the spirit. *Partaking* of a simple meal, he went forth, and now beheld

the golden morning flushing to regal purple. Gazing upon the stream, it seems to him that the waters have been sinking all the night, eddying, whirling, dimpling, shooting hither and thither at every angle amidst the bars.

On the previous day his almost fruitless labors had been expended on the dry sands of the ravine. The first impulse is now to resume the excavation where the work ceased at nightfall.

Baking and fattening in solitary opulence, while the world itself has performed thousands of revolutions around the sun, the region which we survey is one vast treasure mine. The peaks of quartz which at intervals peer above the valleys are but the glistening horns of the huge golden idol who sleeps beneath the soil. Where is his heart? No man can tell: perchance where the planet's central fires are bubbling and boiling with melted gems and metals. Who knows where his eyes are gleaming? Perhaps in that far valley where the Indian miner in search for diamonds sifted out the lustrous yet fated koh-i-noor. He lies like some tawny lion whose yellow hair and tangled mane are coated over with masses of wrinkled sands; and where the gigantic beast has risen, in the old times, to shake himself and paw the earth, the sweat that stood upon his locks or oozed and trickled from his brow lies hardened into hail-stones of metal. His sleeping places, where the mighty boulders grew pregnant from his breath and changed to solid masses of precious ore, perhaps lie hidden among these jutting rocks. Perchance the stream, wherein on Summer days, when, rushing to the waters, he laved his yellow sides and wallowed in the ooze, and lashed the sparkling currents into precious foam, has hidden deep beneath its whirls and eddies, under shelving rock ledges and in wave-worn hollows, many a remembrance. But he is silent now. The river slips away toward the ocean, and the waves sing "we come and we go;" the sandbars change, and now reveal

and now conceal such gifts that even to dream of makes the miser mad with a delirium of gold. His work is done; and mortals delve with incredible toil, while the bent back blisters and the hand and the feet grow hard like the paws of animals,—slowly extracting the drops that glistened once upon his mane, the nuggets that changed to mineral if perchance they touched him while he slept.

So men worship the beast and his image, and bear his mark on their foreheads and in their hands. Then their hearts become callous like these jutting horns of quartz, or split into ravines, where the carcasses of the dead hopes and virtues, that once lived, but were slain as the breast grew evil, protrude their fleshless, skeleton frames and wait the judgment day.

Some turn pirates in his service,—selling their souls for massive ingots and rich plate chests, and great piles of moldores and doubloons, robbed from galleons, and buried afterward by fierce possessors on lonely keys of the Atlantic or Pacific coast. Then, if such a thing were possible, failing in this life to reclaim their treasure, the ghosts slip out, from bodies that were hung in chains, or eaten by sharks, or that perished, raving, waterless, foodless, gnawing their flesh for hunger and sucking at the veins for thirst, as they floated on dismantled wrecks, becalmed beneath the torrid sun,—pale spectres, with the insatiable gold hunger still fierce within the heart, and vainly clutching with their unsubstantial hands at the useless wealth that mocks their sight forevermore.

Yet the beast is a good creature whom the good God made. It is not his fault that men have erected his image into an idol and fallen prone before it. Not his fault that fathers have sold their daughters, husbands their wives, maidens their purity and men their souls, to win perchance some mass of earthly element transmuted by his touch.

Peter Styles is no worshiper, no devotee, though here

he stands among the altars or feels his way beneath jutting cliffs that are the altar's very horns. Little as he has seen of the coined images of the yellow king, few of them as he has called his own, they stand in the good man's estimation for their true value,—*means, not ends*; willing servants if their lords will use them right; running to and fro as if their tiny feet were shod with lightning, and working wonders as they run; messengers and servants of a greater King than Midas, and a wiser one, a King who came in old days from a far land to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick and those that were in prisons, and to make men's hearts leap for joy within the breast; while the filth and the sordors vanished at his touch, and the dead were made alive again and the lost found.

Does some dewy opiate still linger in the morning air? Spade and pick, as the honest miner steps into the workings of the day before seem very heavy. There is a faintness at his heart; the place feels close and stifling, he cannot work in the ravine.

The splendid crimson of the east now flushes to its brightest hue. The good man is no sun worshiper but the august spectacle woos him from his toil. Still the better to behold it, still more fully to inhale the morning breeze, he leaves the glen, and, spade in hand, and leaning on the instrument of labor, pauses to look around, where the narrow gulch terminates at the stream.

Below his feet the water boils and dimples, and its dark glossiness kindles to a hue of rose leaves; and see, a pair of water birds; they dive beneath its surface for their food, or circle round and round while purple breast and mottled wing are jeweled in the morning beam. "Oh!" sighs the lonely one, "even the wild duck has its mate and none to harm it, and a home on this wild stream." A moment the impatient murmur is at the heart, but he conquers it with a "Fie on thee Peter, fie on thee! dost thou complain when

thy Master said 'the foxes have holes and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man no place to lay his head?' "

The solitary heron on the distant sand-bar, wading in the shallow water from point to point, beholds the upshooting radiance, touching with its finger a distant pinnacle and kindling the gathered mist to flame. The broad pinions are slowly extended, and, beating heavily for a moment, move with airier motion as the bird arises and floats, kindling Phoenix-like, when, far above, the yet unrisen sun throws forth a sparkling wave of light and bathes her in its brightness.

Yes, look upward Peter, look upward. Follow the wandering bird with tearful gaze; thou too a wanderer. She fieth to her home; perhaps her mate and little ones, even now, from some sedgy promontory, behold her coming. Perchance thou too shalt find, in these wild waters, food for the mother bird, food for the tiny fledgling whom thou hast left. He who guides the heron, doth He not direct the faithful whom He came to save?

The sun is rising now, and, like some great harvester, reaps down the crimson and the purple flowers, the waving golden wheat-fields of the sky, that stood in airy ripeness, bending their plumed heads against the breeze of morning; piling them at last in mighty heaps of sheaves, and driving them before his presence to some cloudy harvest-home far hidden in the west. The day, with all its busy labors, is begun.

Who links ideas together in the human mind? What silent voice is that which suggests opportunity to the criminal? which tells a spoiler when the good man of the house is on a journey; and intimates the unlocked till, the unfastened window, to the burglar or the thief? What other voice is that which bids the man who is almost a criminal pause and weigh the consequences of his action? When at morn we pray to our Infinite Protector and Care-taker,

"Give us this day our daily bread," do we not ask a special Providence, so far as is lawful, to prosper our honest undertakings? And does not the Infinite Answerer guide men as well as water-fowl? Our adventurer bethinks him that he will again ask God's blessing upon the labors of the day, and kneels where, it may be, prayer never rose before since the morning of creation.

"Our Father who art in heaven!" Reader, repeat within thyself this prayer; join the poor miner in his orison, and then bethink thee, Who it is that expressly bids us to adore Him as the Common Parent. Oh, this world is no chance offspring of nebulae and star-drifts; it is God's own handiwork. The volume within the coarse folds of the miner's canvas shirt—that is no chance medley of priestcraft and superstition; the written oracle contains the solution of the vast, unwritten page.

It is time for work. "Meat and mass," as goes the proverb, "hinder no man's journey." The worshiper stands up refreshed from that silent communion. Lightly as the swallow over the water, the trusting heart flutters upward and moves above its fate. The honest man lifts his hand to the brow. What if there is gold in the waters as well as in the sands? Unpromising enough seems the burrow in the ravine. Why not wade out where the river turns beyond that line of sand-bars, and see what the currents have washed down against the point where the low, shelving ledge curves like a crescent upward against the stream? It is a daring thought, yet now, while inly inquiring of the soul's Father how his steps shall be directed, the verse that greeted him in the open Bible at the early dawn stands out again, as in clear, golden letters that his mind's eye may peruse, "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee."

It is the dry season, and the streams have receded during the long protracted drought far below their usual

level. Feather River has gone down perceptibly during the night, leaving now exposed many a quicksand, many a worn, hard-beaten hollow, where perhaps man has not passed dryshod for centuries.

Shall he go out, not knowing but that the quicksand, not knowing but that some dark, deep, treacherous whirlpool may engulf him? There is a quiet confidence in his eye, a consciousness of safety in his bosom.

Villainy stirs in the bright morning as well as honest thrift; and two men, plodding to their own labor in the ravine, stop to gaze upon the waters, and watch him from the cliff.

The wader has now ventured where the stream is breast high, the current strong, the ground an oozy, slippery clay. His chest beats full. "Steady, steady!" is his whisper, as, bracing the firm limbs against the water, he goes down deeper. It is now hard bottom.

The wild fellows on the bank are watching with looks of eager interest. Chivers is one, and mutters with an oath, "What is the fool driving at? He cannot pass the rapids; see, he is under now."

With dripping locks the wader lifts his head again above the current, and has recovered a foothold, as Handy Ben replies to his gipsy associate, "What do we care? There's one less in the diggins, and two hampers to be unpacked between us."

Many rods from the shore the bold man is slowly nearing the great bar which divides the stream. The true foot is the sure foot. Now he rests at the extremity of the long and shelving crescent, where still the water lies in potholes amidst the rocks, and where the current boiled and rippled but yesterday.

At this extreme verge, upon a rocky ledge, with part of its huge bulk arresting the progress of the stream, and causing a vast deposit of sand, our adventurer stood for a

moment carefully surveying with his quick eye the formation of the soil. Beyond, the main body of the river, rushing past with extreme velocity, and apparently much too deep for wading, formed, when its progress was impeded by the sharp, curving beak at the lower part of the sandbar, a huge eddy, in which the water churned itself to a milky foam. Yet beneath that eddy, and in the rocky hollow, worn by the tumbling water at its centre, must be, if anywhere on this bar, the treasure for which he seeks. But shall he venture? It is apparently beyond depth within an arm's length of the point which affords a foothold. Venture? The slow buzzard, perched upon a dead limb on the bank opposite, flaps his heavy pinions and sails away, as if to call his companions to feast on the drowned man who shall trust his person within those dangerous currents; while, hidden behind a serrated point of the cliff at which he commenced this daring venture, two human vultures, now joined by a third, peer with eager glances, and mutter, "The man is mad, and bent on drowning himself; or deeper far than we are in the mysteries of the gold seeker." To their surprise the heavy boots are taken off, the miner's jacket laid aside, the precious talisman removed from its hiding place, lest these cold waves should stain its sacred pages; the broad hat then reverently lifted as he asks the Guide and Leader of all just undertakings to be with him now. So the stout, God-fearing mariners of Hawkins and Drake besought His blessing ere they grappled the huge galleons of the Spanish Armada; so God-fearing men of all times have felt, to be sure that the Strong Arm was within reach, ere they met the final peril.

The buzzard has sailed away to call his mates, but one human vulture turns to his fellow and mutters, with an imprecation, "Let's see how much gold the fellow will get. Ten ounces to three the waters suck him down."

Brave hearts, when the moment of action comes, are all

nerve, all sinew. The soul shoots into the body like a valiant war horse, leaping with a trumpet blast, into the equipments which he is to bear through the fight or like the mightier spirit of steam, working at valve and piston, and bringing all the ponderous machinery into action most complete.

Firmly braced against the current which at first is almost overpowering; balancing with both arms against the resistance of the eddy, where it whirls around the curve; then venturing deeper, deeper, up to the arm pits, then to the neck, then to the chin, he stands at last with sure footing, feeling with his naked feet for hollows where the pebbles and *debris* have accumulated.

The buzzard has returned, and now, with a companion slowly gyrating in the middle sky, seems waiting to behold the strong man whirled beyond his depth, gasping and gurgling, clutching at the slant sunbeams that grow like golden water plants through the green waves, then floating supine and ready to become their unresisting prey. And, mark! one human vulture turns to his confederate and hoarsely whispers, "Double your bet. I'll take it; twenty ounces against six that he never comes to time."

Down goes the treasure seeker. Ten seconds, twenty,—half a minute,—he is still under water. Now the wet locks rise; the diver has brought up fragments of quartz; a flint arrow head; gray, wave-worn pebbles;—no gold.

Down he goes again. The trio on the shore do not perhaps remember to have heard that Styles on one occasion saved a child from drowning by his skill and presence of mind; that he is a famous swimmer and diver as well. This time they give him up. Thirty seconds,—fifty,—sixty,—a minute and a quarter slowly pass. The burglars find it exciting as a play in the fifth act, and Chivers mutters, "The wager is yours Joe. The devilkins have him." Nearer come, in lessening, still lessening circles, the obscene birds

that loomed upon the dead, and peer from their dizzy height to see in what deep whirlpool, far below the surface, gasps and struggles the drowning man.

"When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee." The diver has struck against a massive rock that lies, worn smooth, in the whirlpool's very centre. Holding his breath; opening his eyes to gaze round in the dark green light; sifting pebbles of all sizes together; whirling them as in the hollow of a bowl to separate the heavier from the lighter stones; then, as he feels that the last air bubble is exhausted in the lungs, grasping at those that lie in the middle, once again the pale face shoots to light, the laboring chest takes in once more of the welcome air. Cautiously raising the two closed hands, one contains but worthless pebbles, while the momentary disappointment, striking at the heart, arrests the reactive motion of the body, and the whole frame shivers, for the stream is cold, ice cold. But the other hand holds more than pebbles. What is this that, with a dull, metallic lustre, meets his eye? An ounce nugget. There are treasures hid beneath the stream.

The sight of gold, while it hardens some hearts, melts others. One of the last comers in these wild regions, Peter had been unsuccessful hitherto, having but little experience in mining, and his scanty resources were this morning almost exhausted. The ounce nugget is his first finding of any value.

Small as it is, there may be more—must be more, in the flood. Once again, commending himself to the Divine Protector, the waters close above his head. This time he determines, if possible, more carefully to examine the deposit. Collecting every energy for the effort, and throwing his whole person at length upon the rocky floor, at last his hand lights on a boulder more massive than the others. Surely this must be part of the underlying rock; it is immovable; the heavy stones around it give way at the

pressure of hand or foot, but this is solid as a blacksmith's anvil. Yet no! It is not a part of the river's bed; that last, convulsive strain, as he shifted his position, has turned it partially upon its side.

Good Adam Clarke narrates that he was once so far drowned as to be with difficulty resuscitated. He describes the experience which he underwent, after the first fit of strangulation was over, as like that of a person in a pleasant dream. The sensitive retina pictured upon itself, in vivid and most lovely images, year after year of his past existence, till, as the bright tints vanished, a sweet, infantile slumber followed.

Peter had now been more than a minute under the surface. Already the tingling sensation was in his ears, and the chest smitten with sharp pains. An hour before England had seemed at the world's end; but now it grew palpable, and almost within the reach of an arm,—the touch of a hand. Quick, powerful, electric, thought after thought of Moll, the tender wee thing, toddling about the floor, and the comely matron, little Moll's mother, with a depth of untold tenderness in her beseeching eyes, came, vibrating at his heart's doors, as if to nerve the spirit for some herculean task. Then, as once more his hand fell on the resisting boulder, as if the great stone became suddenly gifted with speech, a something flashed from it into his mind, and said, "This is gold." No time was allowed for a second thought. Brawny arms heaved at it, and the huge stone moved again. Kneeling, and now grasping it to his breast in all its massive bulk, the strong man slowly staggered to his feet, while it rose beneath the water. It was with a death strain that he was able, and barely able, to sustain the burden. Then the wondrous text flashed once more into his memory: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee." Struggling forward his head emerged for a moment, and, while the water boiled in the whirlpool, the

lungs took in to their utmost; the heart beat as with the pulse of a cannon. Once again the strong man staggered, sinking over head in the stream, while the pebbles gave way beneath the weight, and one sharper than the rest cut the ankle to the bone. Another strain, another gasp, and now he is where the full force of the eddy must be overcome. One step more, with a last convulsive effort, and the boulder, which he cannot lift out of the water, though able to bear it while it is partially supported by the resisting density of the stream, almost crushes him. One more step—one final heave: it half buries its weight within the sand at the water's edge, while, with a murmured "Thank God!" the finder falls exhausted by its side. Jacob pillowed his head upon a stone, but this poor wanderer, sinking almost into a swoon, is supported by a wave-worn mass of virgin gold.

CHAPTER XVI.

WILD WORK.

While the buzzards peer at their human prototypes, and then, with disappointed cries, sail down the stream ; in dark green doublet, much the worse for wear, and buckskin hose upon his nether limbs, old Roger Benbow, seeing, as he draws near this barren place, the oil-skin tent of which he is in search, halts his pack-horses, tethers them where a scant bit of pasture affords a needful repast for the hungry beasts, is mindful that no one is within eye shot or ear shot, takes a hearty meal of jerked beef and remainder biscuit, moistens the whole with a temperate libation, slightly qualified with Cognac, looks hard at his pipe, but, without lighting, thrusts the wooden stem again in the hatband, and mutters to his inseparable companion, the whipper-in, "Here they be, just forward. Mum's the word." The oaken staff with the fox's head is left at home, but pickaxe and shovel, with the revolver snugly tucked within hand's reach, supply an equipment befitting the place.

We left our miner pillowed on his glorious prize. When sudden good fortune befalls a man of resolute spirit, so far from flinching from labor and luxuriating on its charms, he gathers up the forces of his frame until the undertaking is complete. So Peter, hardly allowing himself a scant half-hour for refreshment, was in the stream again. It was not the greed of treasure that urged him on, but rather a deep conviction that the Divine hand was nerving him to manly

toil for a life's competence. The trout-fisher, though he has taken of a lowery morning the very monarch of the brook, regales his eyes but stealthily, and for a moment, on the gasping victim, ere once again the fly is dancing over the wimpling eddy or floating toward the deep, dark shelter which promises to contain another and another. Hearty men work by the sport impulse, and make a play of it, though often a desperate play, as when swords cross in the battle, or a glorious, fearful play, as when stout fishermen ply the oars of the lifeboat, or the fireman leaps into the blazing room where a frantic mother has left her babe in the wild uproar of a conflagration. The heroism of action is like a flame that plays about the heart: the soul leaps on exultingly, tasking the body to the utmost while it puts forth herculean powers.

Before eleven o'clock, around the huge nugget, itself the lordly sovereign of them all, the successful diver, having now become accustomed to his task and familiar with the strength and movement of the eddy and the situation of the hollows and crevices over which it rolled, had succeeded in removing its precious contents to the shore. Round balls like pistol bullets; fantastic plates similar to those made by melted lead escaping from a plumber's vessel; twisted and feathered clumps of every imaginable shape, some sharp almost as knives, others wedgy and others still like corrugated blocks, worn smooth and polished at the corners, lay piled together, while the father of the family peered above them, rejoicing in his goodly progeny. When all were brought into a heap together it made the weary, gasping man wonder, and rub his eyes and pinch his flesh, to be sure that this was not a dream.

The monkey of the fable made use of the velvet paws of tabby to pluck chestnuts from the fire, and grimalkin suffered from the blistered feet as Jacko filled his paunches with the delicious edibles. While our friend Phil Bulwinkle, as he

persists in being called, is working like a giant and slowly gathering up the golden spoil, the rapacious trio on the bank are deep in earnest consultation. It is not their nature to investigate the question of morals; theirs is the maxim of ungodly, strong men ever since the days of Cain or Nimrod, "might makes right." Unable to believe at first that the great boulder is a rock of gold, they become finally satisfied that the miner is taking out of the whirlpool mass after mass of solid treasure. As the bullion accumulates, still hidden behind their rocky promontory, the conversation becomes more animated, while the nervous workings of face and hands bespeak that crime is rousing itself up for deeds of blood.

At first they cannot agree upon the course of action. Cunning Joe suggests that short work is commonly sure work; and Handy Ben chimes in with him, while the deadly rifle in the hands of the experienced marksman indicates murder, and that right speedily. Chivers dissents from this opinion. "True," he says, "dead men tell no tales; but if we fire, and miss, he will swim the river to the opposite side and perhaps fall in with other adventurers before we can collect the booty and retreat." The gipsy's policy was to leave the miner quietly at his toil till the pocket was exhausted. "Why kill the fellow before his work was done. He would, doubtless, at high twelve, return to his tent, for no man could labor thus without finding the need of food and rest. Then, as foot-sore and weary, the fellow came up through this deep gorge, one crack of the revolver close to his ear would settle him, without the risk of escape or the danger of discovery."

Handy Ben suggested that a better course might be to wade out, armed, to the sand bar, finish him there, come back with a load of the gold, and so kill two birds with one stone. This the wiser heads over-ruled, and it was determined that the gipsy's counsel was, under the circum-

stances, the wisest, most certain and feasible. Meanwhile they keep a sharp look out from their lurking place behind the cliff, where the ravine in which their labors have been conducted terminates abruptly at the river's brink. It was here that Bulwinkle entered the water and to this spot he must return.

Leaving the confederates lurking in ambush for their expected victim, we go back to the Forester, concerning whose fortunes and misfortunes for the last five years a few particulars may not be amiss. Returning to Riverside, as we have seen, from the sea-port to which, a day too late for any useful purpose, he had traced the abducted heiress, the months of the ensuing spring and summer rapidly passed in the midst of ineffectual efforts, privately conducted for the purpose of obtaining some definite information of Chivers and the child. Becoming disheartened, with many misgivings and with now and then a concealment, he made a confidant of Job Trusty, the steward, narrating to him his reasons for believing that Dr. Bushwig was a party to the spiriting away of the foundling from the house of Marian Deschamps, and also the grounds upon which he had based the conclusion that this was the little granddaughter of the Earl, and now somewhere in America and still in custody of the gipsy; Trusty being one of the executors and guardians under the will.

At first the steward was inclined to argue against the suppositions of the Forester, for by this time it was known that a woman of the Chivers family, dying at Coddlington Green, had raved in her last hours of a child whom she had stolen; and when, finally, the slender lass who called her "mother" perished of the same infection, a package of linen, identified as that which had been upon the person of the stolen infant, and marked with the initials "R. D." and a coronet, had been found among their scanty effects. To imagine for a moment that so foul a plot, involving the

second abduction and prospective moral ruin of an innocent girl and she his cousin, could have been deliberately formed and put into execution by a respectable clergyman of the establishment, seemed almost incredible.

The Forester, at this juncture, requested that his information, still in strictest confidence, should be communicated to the other executors, who accordingly met in Dr. Hartwell's library, where Benbow, commencing with the first abduction of the infant Rosa, unfolded his theory. The Lawyer at once coincided, while, to Trusty's astonishment, Dr. Hartwell inclined to the same belief, both seeming to be convinced of the Rector of Richmanstown's meditated fraud.

As the subject was more fully discussed, the evidence weighed, and the theory of the Forester sifted, the Steward, whose slow Scotch head, when once fixed in an opinion held it there with an almost immovable pertinacity, gradually gave up his objections, and became at last more thoroughly convinced than were the others. To find the missing child and instantly reclaim her from the custody of her abductor, was Dr. Hartwell's immediate suggestion, but the wary fox-hunter, pointing out the importance of securing the testimony of Dr. Bushwig's complicity with Chivers, and, also, of the deception practiced at Codlington Green, the man of the law declared at once, that, could this be obtained and the child secured, all probable difficulty in the way of establishing her identity and of securing the succession would be at an end. It was, therefore, agreed that Benbow should be dispatched at once in quest of the parties.

It being of the last importance that no suspicion that he was believed to be implicated should reach the Rector of Richmanstown; after waiting quietly for a few days, choosing his opportunity when gossips were within ear-shot who might spread the news, the Forester came to high words with the Steward, who, entering heartily into the old man's

project, replied, as it seemed, with all the heat of a Borderman. The two almost came to blows and soon it was announced that Benbow had been dismissed from his situation.

After this the Forester wore the appearance of a man overtaken with misfortunes, vowed vengeance against Trusty at the taps of public houses, and even had the art to ingratiate himself into the favor of the earl expectant, Bushwig, who became a patron and a sympathizer, promising to reinstate the old man in his position when the suit at law should be decided. Roger then broke up his housekeeping, disposing of goods and chattels at a vendue; and now it began to be hinted that he was little better than a bankrupt, having embarked his savings in some disastrous foreign speculation. Gossips complained that it was shameful for the executors to turn out an old retainer of the family, after so many years of faithful service in a post which his father and grandfather had held before.

Shunned by many of his former acquaintance, who beheld in him but a discarded follower, he affected shabbiness in his appearance. When, one day, it was announced that, in company with the whipper-in, he had started off to try his fortune in the colonies, it was a nine days' talk in the neighborhood, and then almost forgotten.

Warily journeying from point to point, in the States and Canadas, ostensibly engaged at one time in smuggling upon the lines, then busied as the keeper of an obscure public house for Old Countrymen in one of the great *entrepôts* on the sea-board, taking care that none should suspect his purpose, four years elapsed, during which after every expedient the gipsy still had eluded all search. At last, when fortune seemed to fail, affecting a loose morality and little regard for law, suspicious characters began to harbor about his premises, and then, after many a carouse, the desired information was obtained;—Chivers was in California.

More wary than ever, he began to talk "gold" as if a fever of adventure was upon him. Once more disposing of the "Pewter Mug," good will, lease and furniture, still with the follower at his beck, jostling across the Isthmus, and aided on by many a hint gathered up from thieves and burglars, he landed at San Francisco. Now habited and employed as miners, the two journeyed from place to place, fortunate to find at last a certain clue to the man of whom they were in search, and tracked him finally to the remote locality of Feather River. This morning, as he beheld the tent of the villain and his associates the old man's heart kindled with all its youthful fire. What though the fox had doubled and the scent failed, though two oceans had successively been placed between the animal and his pursuers? what though the grizzled hairs had grown gray in the search and the wrinkles knotted themselves like strands of whipcord on the visage? This was his hiding place.

Cautiously moving forward, with sagacity redoubled now that the search of five long years seems coming to an issue, the Forester reconnoiters, nor does he long continue before discovering that the sandy plain is broken by a sudden and deep ravine. Stealing now like an Indian who scents an enemy, creeping upon the ground, as the sun mounts toward the meridian voices in sharp and sudden conversation are evidently near at hand. Gaining a point of advantage where he can scan the deep gulch without danger of being observed, his eye takes in the villains, who, standing closely together, and hidden from the river by a jutting rock, peer out from time to time toward the remote bar, and then handle their weapons as if the time moved slowly while they awaited a coming victim.

Moving still nearer to the scene, with eye that takes in both land and water, a solitary miner upon the sand bar attracts the Forester's eye. The good glass which is carried within the folds of the doublet reveals the treasure seeker,

now making his last dive, then emerging from the water, then with straining nerves rolling the great nugget to the center of the islet, then gathering together in a heap around it what appear at this distance to be stones of all sizes, then resting his head for a moment upon the spade or contemplating the mound, and at last committing himself once more to the wild stream between the sand bar and the hither shore. Now too, while the wader is still in the shallows or cautiously venturing where the rapid currents shoot between, the glass is turned toward the rogues ensconced in ambush. It needs but one sharp, scrutinizing look to reveal the face of the gipsy.

Roger Benbow is concealed behind a boulder on the narrow path, which all must take, ascending from the ravine and the river to the table land. As he closes the telescope the trio part. Chivers saunters up this way and will soon pass within arms' length. The weapon which he bears is a revolver, and see, he is cautiously ramming down the barrels and carefully examining that the powder fills the nipples;—now he has replaced the caps;—now he approaches within a few feet;—now passes by and shirks behind the face of a projecting angle of the cliff. The sharp click indicates that the weapon is cocked and ready for a shot. Benbow can even hear the deep breathing of the brawny chest, so near are they together.

Restraining his every movement; keeping back as much as possible the respiration; all eye, all ear, all nerve for what shall come next, the Forester now beholds the dripping miner emerging from the stream and faltering up the pathway like one exhausted with the morning's toil; while, lazily sauntering in the same direction, each with jacket upon the arm, puffing apparently from fatiguing labor and the heat of the sun, and seeming to wipe the perspiration from their brows, the gipsy's two confederates accost the man who is to die; bantering him at his folly in leaving the ravine

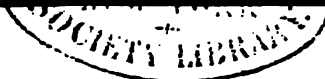
where the precious ore is to be had for the digging, and risking life in prospecting on those shifting sandbars.

The distance narrows. It is twenty feet;—now ten;—now, with brisker steps, leaving Bulwinkle to lag in the rear, and wishing him better success in his next venture, they pass the ledge, behind which Chivers lies in wait. Another instant, and still with dripping garments trailing water as he moves, steadying himself for an instant against the rock, within a ramrod's length of the muzzle of the unseen weapon, the honest fellow takes breath.

With unerring aim the pistol opens its deadly chambers, so near now that the sweaty ooze, like a mist, from the doomed man's dripping locks, lies on the steel-blue barrel with a delicate spray. Then the nervous finger of the gipsy touches the spring. The weapon explodes.—Stunned, blackened, while the old rocks ring with echo after echo, the victim has fallen, and slow, trickling blood oozes from his temples.

What sharp blow of a spade struck up that rifled barrel just as the hammer was falling on the cap, dashing it, as the weapon exploded, beyond the villain's reach and out of sight? What iron, decisive voice is this which shouts, at the turn of the rocks which the trio have agreed shall be Phil Bulwinkle's death chamber and burial-place, "Avast there! Man to man!" And now what sturdy, stalwart, weather-beaten frame is this, that, better armed, stands over the apparently dead or dying miner? The English fox-hound and the gipsy fox have met at last.

Was or was not that sudden spade-thrust a thousandth part of a minute too late? and did that leaden death messenger whiz harmlessly and spend itself in blue air or bore a passage through the brain? Drop by drop the blood trickles where the gory temple shows a crimson stain, and half the face is blackened by the powder, while, lying there *like tears* that the heart wept as the spirit fled without a



moment's warning into the presence of its God, the great, red splashes purple against the begrimed countenance.—Falling with his face upward, the man lies now with brawny chest exposed; and see! while the features work convulsively, as if the nerves, disturbed in this hasty manner, were slowly contracting to their final repose, a little volume which has been carried in the folds of the shirt, thrown from its hiding-place by the jar and the fall, is exposed half open against the quivering chest. One might read upon that page, which turns its faded letters against the sun, such words as these:

“Take no thought for your life. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Stand here, oh, prophet of chance and blind necessity; man of the smooth tongue, skilled in argument from the mere appearances of things. Take the gory temples and the blood-bedabbled face of this poor victim and argue from them that ‘God helps the heavy battalions;’ argue from them that the shrewd eye, the hard heart, the plotting brain and the dead conscience carry with them strength and victory. It is the fool’s, the madman’s reasoning, world over, and timid men of a faint half-goodness more than incline to it. Reason, from this tragic scene, that our world is given up to the dominion of the men who act in the wisdom of self-love, and live with no supreme regard to the great law of service. Appearances are in your favor. Give the lie to that burning, that consoling sentence which bespeaks a Father’s care for even the frail body and its mortal wants. Yours shall be an innumerable congregation to applaud and pronounce the demonstration perfect at the close.

But English Peter is not dead. The thousandth part of a minute was not lost. The spade struck opportunely. True, the temples bleed where the sharp rocks left their imprint as he fell. True, the sudden shock has brought faint-

ness for a moment to the heart ; but the tearful, faithful wife in that distant village is no widow, her babe no orphan !

When Spring returns the formed buds are all ready to become leaves and blossoms. An exquisite harmony pervades the realms of nature, and all things are made dependent, one upon another, in the infinite design. So there is a viewless providence that works in the realm of human events, that reveals itself in quick surprises and that performs its miracles so opportunely for the deliverance of the good, that the grateful heart may see therein the direct over-ruling of an All-wise Mind, and the immediate interposition of an Almighty hand.

No man can look God's Providence in the face or meet the shining wonder in its coming, but, when the awful glory has gone by, viewing it in the past as it recedes from sight, He permits us to understand how near He was ; permits us thereby to feel how near He ever is to those who work His will.

Dr. Hartwell sang, when a shrewd plot, based on falsehood, was foiled for a time in a manner unforeseen ; and Peter Styles will sing to-night another verse of the same profound and touching lyric.

God's purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour ;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.
Blind Unbelief is sure to err
And scan the work in vain ;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

The years are full of narrow escapes like this, which seem improbable when they occur in the fictions of the novelist. But life abounds with facts still more wonderful, which *men*, according as they are devout or undevout, wise

or unwise, call "special providences" or "curious coincidences." Benbow was there at the moment when life depended on his presence. Who moved Benbow? Who moves the wild swan southward when winter comes to subdue the North American Continent to his icy sceptre and leads on the white battalions from the Arctic Pole? Who moves the earth itself, poised on a filament of invisible thought, in her huge, diurnal motion, and suffers no sand grain from all the continents to drop away?

As the Forester stands above the prostrate miner, now slowly opening his eyes and taking in the danger that is past, he meets rogue's tricks with sportsmen's tricks, shouting, "Come my fine fellows, what's up?"

Chivers is never left without a subterfuge, and answers, sharply, as if arrested in the execution of some righteous vengeance, "This fellow, last night, when we were sleeping, entered our tent and robbed our treasure; five hundred ounces. Gold costs blood in miner's law. Stand aside, old chap." With this response he draws another weapon, while Handy Ben and Cunning Joe brandish their keen knives. The passions of the half breed were now raging in all their stormy force. The dark face glowed with a copper hue as the hot blood flashed through it. "Stand aside, old man!" he shouted a second time, "Blood for gold!" while his comrades, pressing on, caught up the cry and the cliffs rang with the echo, "Blood for gold!"

The Forester was too wise, in his astute worldliness, to put life in peril when a shrewd word might sheathe knives and uncock revolvers. "Wild work! Wild work!" was his answer, standing yet between the prostrate man and the trio and covering the three with the weapon, while the dark eyes, lion like, seemed filled with a concentrated fire to cower down the weaker wills that met their gaze. "Wild work! If he deserves to be shot, short shrift I say, and a

long journey. Just explain the matter and we'll lynch him on the spot if he is a thief."

The Forester was now intent on postponing the combat, wishing to gain a brief interval of time. During the momentary parley the quick blood had rallied, the stupor of the shock was over; Peter felt that he had a man's part to play, and, with a great effort, nerving up the spirit to its fate, turned and rose upon his knees, finding beneath him and grasping in his hand with sudden resolution the revolver which Benbow had dashed from the hold of Chivers, with its five yet loaded barrels. As the stout hand clutched the weapon the honest voice shouted "Agreed to this. There's One who sees, and He knows all. In Him I trust." Instantly the Forester took advantage of this unexpected accession of force, to cry "Back all of you or we both fire!" The gipsy blood is quick but flinches before the dogged Saxon force. Benbow availed himself of the moment of irresolution, turning to Styles with a low "whist, man; aim at the tall fellow; leave the gipsy to me." It now seemed as if a combat was inevitable, when, suddenly, another explosion, from the neighborhood of the tent of the confederates, caused them for a moment to pause a second time and look around. The tent was in flames.

When the Forester, so opportunely coming up with the object of his search, had ascertained that Chivers and his associates were mining in the ravine, taking care himself to act as scout, the whipper-in had been entrusted with the all-important task of ransacking the tent for the documents which it was supposed that the felon kept in his possession. Discovering an oil skin wallet, carefully concealed in the water-proof haversack of the gipsy, prying into every nook and corner of the domicile, but meeting with no other prize, the follower, pursuing his instructions, dropped a match into the pile of clothing and stealthily crept away. The flames, communicating to a powder cannister before they finally

rose to the material of the tent itself, were the cause of the report. The ruffians broke, and fled. Guilt always divines, when trouble overtakes it, a far more serious calamity. The Botany Bay convicts, companions of Chivers, were the first to reach the blazing spot, beneath which lay their hidden treasure, while the gipsy, covering their retreat with fire arms, followed after. Styles, by this time upon his feet, and now attentively beholding the face of his rescuer, broke out, "Master Benbow, is that you?" Surprised to be accosted by a familiar voice, Roger peered again at the gory, blackened visage, grasped the honest fellow by the hand, shook it heartily, and exclaimed, "Peter Styles! as I live!" The next motion was to fumble in the doublet for his brandy flask. As the sufferer tasted of the exhilarating fluid and felt the temporary stimulus, so needful at the moment, his friend exclaimed, "No time for parley. Up and after 'em," dashing, as he spoke, to the summit, followed by the miner, and making the hills ring with cheer after cheer.

The scene was indeed well worthy of the artist's hand. In the center shone the fallen tent, its combustible materials now sending up their last, red sparks, mingled with shooting, arrowy fire-tongues. With hair and whiskers singed, and garments scorched, and hands and faces blistered, while still the gipsy kept guard, with cocked revolver, the convicts were tearing at the spot where the concealed haversack had been deposited, hoping to find the treasure that lay beneath. At the extremity of the scene, answering the Forester's cheer with loud hurrahs, and pressing on with all the frontiers-man's eagerness for frolic or fight, waving in the center of their group a tattered banner with stars and stripes, some on foot bearing picks and rifles, others leading pack-mules by the bridle, appeared the main body of adventurers, whom Benbow had left the day before in his eagerness to be the first at the scene. Among them was the whipper-in, whose stolid face betrayed no evidence

of the oil-skin wallet snugly hidden within his garment's folds.

At two P.M., Judge Lynch improvised justice, throned upon a pack-saddle hastily placed over a sandstone boulder. The convicts and their leader were allowed every opportunity of making good their defence; and, after an impartial trial, were found guilty of having attempted the life of Phil Bulwinkle, *alias* Peter Styles, were adjudged to a hundred lashes, and to be shot if found within sight of the camp by sunrise of the next day. It was with difficulty that their expected victim succeeded in obtaining a remission of the first part of the punishment.

At five P.M., the Englishman, having communicated his good fortune of the morning to the honest adventurers, and relinquished claim to the remaining contents of the pot-holes in the eddy to a company who assisted in the removal of the treasure to the Forester's tent, had the satisfaction of ascertaining that his bullion could be worth not less than in the region of ten thousand pounds. Many a rough and bearded fellow might secretly have envied him this good fortune, but the perils through which he had passed to obtain it touched more than one brave and kindly heart. Though none of the company succeeded in reaping at once a competence, the rich diggings for many weeks beheld hundreds toiling resolutely in the eddies and pot-holes of the stream, while many a costly deposit rewarded their daring and exciting toil.

Making a speedy escape with their five hundred ounces well concealed, the disappointed felons vanished from the scene, Cunning Joe and Handy Ben congratulating themselves on their escaping with life and uninjured persons, to say nothing of the proceeds of their labor, while Chivers, almost desperate, mourned within himself the loss of the Rector of Richmanstown's bond for ten thousand pounds, and the other documents by which he had hoped to keep

the new-made Earl in constant terror of exposure, fattening himself for life upon the spoils of the Riverside estate.

During the dark hours, while his wounded and exhausted friend lay sleeping, and the whipper-in kept guard without, the Forester examined the contents of the oilskin wallet. A bond, executed at Liverpool by Alphonso Bushwig, for ten thousand pounds, without interest, to be paid to John Chivers, on succeeding to the earldom, was the first document which regaled the old man's sight. Folded within it was a letter from the rector, of a subsequent date, narrating the appearance of another claimant and the approaching suit at law, and containing also a cautiously-worded inquiry if Charity Green was still in existence. A crumpled and ill spelled epistle, carefully placed within a secret pocket, in the hand writing of Martha Chivers, and signed by her name, contained the missing link, which now made the chain of evidence in the possession of the Forester complete. Dated at Coddlington Green more than six years ago, the woman stated that she was suddenly taken ill, and feared the consequences, having been exposed to the small-pox; that, in case of decease, her daughter must be looked after by the family, and not left to starve; and that she had thrown out hints that the girl had been stolen from a great house; and designed, in case her ailment was aggravated and dangerous, to intimate that the child's real name was Rosa, in hopes that something might turn up to her advantage through the assumption. Other letters appeared, one especially written by the other sister, which identified the young girl left by the woman who died at Richmantown with Lord Robert's daughter. Last, and most precious, remained a clue to the hiding-place where the felon had secluded his precious prize—a rough-worded note, mailed from a country post-office on Long Island, in which the writer stated that no remittances had been received for months, and that he must have immediate compensa-

tion for her maintenance. As paper after paper, slowly and carefully perused, gave the astute, painstaking man all needful information, he closed the wallet at last, and, calling to the whipper-in to be roused at three, that he might take turn about in watch, wound a blanket about his person, secreted the invaluable records, took a moderate sleeping cup, thrust a saddle under his head for a pillow, and, with the trusty weapon so placed that the right hand might fall upon it at a moment's warning, dropped asleep.

Awakened at three by the faithful follower, the old man received information that two or three fellows were prowling about the tent till past midnight. The best mules of the party, stolen from the pickets, were now bearing the felons in the direction of the golden gate. Styles was raving by sunrise, and a dangerous fever betrayed itself in the glaring eyes and parched skin. Months passed before the trio, so mysteriously united by a common fate, returned to San Francisco.

CHAPTER XVII.

TROUBLE AT HOME.

The sixth October since the abduction of little Rosa from beautiful Marian's home is showering now its russet leaves and shaking out the floating seeds of the thistle upon the gusty air. There are nuttings and apple gatherings. The presses foam with new-made perry, and spicy scents are borne across the channel, as if, from Rhenish, Burgundian and Gallic vineyards, the royal spirit of the grape was breathing out his essence. Squirrels luxuriate upon the fallen mast, chasing each other round the boles of the beeches, or chattering in their cheerful tongue high in air, where the richest clusters hang in the tops of the great walnuts. The rooks, "caw, caw," leading their well-grown progeny from the ancient elms that are their freehold. The measured beating of the flail resounds from distant threshing floors, and sportsmen are afield.

Many changes have occurred since the canaries trilled their happy duct in the oaken drawing-room of the Bloomfields, while the young man's heart grew light and glad beneath the dawning love in Marian's modest eyes. The old Squire, grown more portly, wears a look of trouble. There are hints of apoplexy in the family. He is summoned abroad this morning to sit as a justice in a matter involving the gipsies whom his son had befriended in days of better cheer. The wild youth, whose acquaintance we made when Peter Styles exercised the gift of bone-setting for his relief, is now a confirmed poacher, and arrested for violation of

the game laws, having been taken at the sport with traps and springes, with pheasants and dead hares in his possession. The country gentlemen who examine the lad, this being an oft-repeated offence, adjudge him to the county jail, in default of a heavy forfeit which they have no reason to suppose can be paid.

On the banks of Feather River we heard an escaped convict mention to his confederate a number of particulars concerning the robbery at Wingate Hall. Since the occurrence the gipsy lad who betrayed his benefactor has become a proficient in crime; but hitherto his more daring violations of the law, his darker offences and more desperate deeds, have escaped detection. The mother, still faithful, though the abandoned son has often met her kindness with shameful abuse, hastens to his relief; now grown gray-haired, with streaming elf locks and piteous tears, pleading with the kind old man to save her boy once more. He consults with the associate justices. The decision is unfavorable, and while the warrant for commitment is being made out, the fellow calls to his mother and whispers in her ear, "Say to the Squire, that if he will leave me here in charge of the constable till six o'clock, the fine shall be paid. Then get a man to drive you over to the Priory, for young Squire Brompton, and say that for a hundred pounds, before that time, he shall have the secret of who wore Peter Styles' shoes. But he must see that I am not harmed for telling it." While the woman has gone on the errand time is afforded us to look around.

The old borough of Richmanstown is little changed. Once in Saxon days, and after that when bold Plantagenets and choleric and subtle Tudors bore the rule, it was a fortified place, where men took refuge in sudden outbreaks of civil war. Slowly the tide of improvement flowing now toward the neighboring hamlet of Sloppery, once, as its name implies, an ill drained marsh, but now a pleasant vil-

lage in the midst of rich and well drained meadows, gradually builds up the new at the expense of the old, while the younger town, growing back toward its progenitor, threatens in time to encompass it as a thriving son takes the family honors while the gray old father wears away.

The chimes that echo from the clock in the belfry of St. Winifred's, floating in airy, golden music through the valley, circle round the rising spire of another temple where God is to be worshiped by loving men. It stands beyond the lovely enclosure, now beautified with autumn's late blown flowers, which surrounds the mansion built by the Barbadoes planter in the early part of the century. The common, which they now style the park, is enclosed with massive railings of iron work and affords a merry play ground for many a village child. The elms of a century's growth wax mightier and cast a shade more dense upon the shaven grass. The Green Lion, one of the few remaining hostleries in which a past generation took delight, still maintains the reputation of buttery and cellar, while village cheer gives place to more refined, perhaps less wholesome, luxuries, as the rural neighborhood becomes the thriving market town. Still sits the jolly landlord, measuring a little more in the girt of his plush waistcoat and with another twinkle of the red harvest moon shining in his rounded face, enjoying a cool tankard of ale beneath the hop vines and honey suckles, now past their flowering, that shade the summer porch. Still, at the sign of the Gilt pestle and Galen's head, Aminadab Vampire deals out pills and powders, looking, if possible, leaner and worse-conditioned than on the Christmas night when he beheld the ghost.

At the Rectory, the wines are as costly, the dinners as luxurious as in former days, but the incumbent seldom takes his place at morning prayer or sermon, the duties of the parish devolving mainly upon the Rev. Dapper Flummery, who yet retains the curacy. It is expected that

the case at law, on which depends the succession to the Riverside estate and honors, will soon be brought to a decision, but, while it is pending, the Rector of Richmans-town, now with more rubicund face and bilious aspect, wears the appearance of a man who is ill at ease. Conscience tells, though as yet wealth, honors and a goodly person, titled acquaintances and an eminent name, provoke the envy of some, who wish that they "could only change places with Dr. Bushwig." Invisible Nemesis has suspended her keen sword by the solitary hair, which at any moment may part its filaments, and there is one who sees it; one who dreams by night that evermore a little child stands between him and the coronet, whispering in that haunting tone that will not be silent, "The Lord sent me: I am Charity Green."

Miss Arabella Flummery is no more a spinster. Failing in her effort to captivate the Rev. and Hon. Alphonso Bushwig by such delicate attentions as flowered dressing gowns and Turkish smoking caps, and, in spite of many asseverations to the contrary, having no belief that matrimony ever was injudicious, donning such befitting garments as best might aid the enterprise, the artful fair one went forth, not fly fishing, or duck shooting, but Bumblefuzzing. Well was she acquainted with the various eddies and currents of the tarn in which her expected victim sailed majestically or sunned his basking sides, or darted to and fro in search of prey. Arrows from the blind boy, who is yet the best of all sharp shooters, if at her command, were snugly hidden from their victim.

In the northern woods of America are deeps where many of the noblest salmonides, styled lakereels by brothers of the angle, hide away a hundred feet below the surface. The successful sportsman must go a day or two before and bait the spot where he designs to bring up from his solitude the father of them all, perhaps with entrails of some fat wether,

or better still, a stag's head. The wary Arabella, approaching the deep waters of the scientific pool in which her prize takes refuge from all feminine arts and artifices, baited him beforehand with a phrenological cast.

Crochet-work and embroidery, the transferring of prints and the manufacture of flannel waistcoats were relinquished, as the employments of the female in a lower stage of mental progress; and now the demure lips announced the lady's conversion to the great development theory, which is to renovate the race by superior specimens of the rising generation, in whom original sin is eradicated and a philosophical and moral organization, impeccable in quality, produced by the substitution of the strictly scientific mode of selecting married associates, by craniological examination and adaptation, for the nonsense of courtships and marriages where the heart bears sway.

Dr. Bumblefuz delivers his annual lecture before the Richmanstown-cum-Sloppery Association for the development of science and the advancement of mankind. Clad in bewitching attire, with tasteful, modern bonnet, gay with interwoven roses and laurels jauntily perched upon the organ of philoprogenitiveness, crowning the highly progressed moral faculties with a symbolical wreath, and affording a flowery background for the display of amply cultured intellectual powers, brought into bold relief and gracefully set off by perfumed tresses not her own, Miss Arabella Flummery appeared conspicuous.

Did the learned and distinguished lecturer observe the kidded hands that clapped applause, the gold pencil that took notes, the intellectual countenance that beamed approval? This is not for us to say, not being in the confidence of philosophers; but, if the experienced damsel was edified on this occasion, and sat like the clay at the root of the rose tree, absorbing its ripe aromas, a soiree at the mansion of the Widow Snuggles soon after, afforded opportunity of

repaying science and philosophy with treble compound interest.

The piano was in tune, nor did the widow seem out of tune. Like a bridegroom elect, the Rev. Dapper Flummery, B. A., assisted, *vis-a-vis* with the hospitable entertainer in doing the honors. The jolly crumpets laughed at being eaten, and the orange marmalade melted like adorable sixteen at a rosy billet-doux. They had forfeits and a game of hunt-the-slipper for the young folks, and, up stairs, in the apartment recently vacated by the tobacconist, Brobose, a quiet whist table or two for elderly gentlemen and ladies. Dapper eyed the hostess as the poet Thompson used to regale himself, in anticipation, on rare ripe peaches within reach, on the garden wall, like a royal guest in a Castle of Indolence, as he was, slowly making up his lips for the approaching feast. At about ten were served sandwiches and rout cake, on little trays, with a delicate mixture, of which sugar, lemons, nutmeg and Scotch whiskey, were the principal ingredients, nicely sweetened and a little milder for the ladies as being the weaker vessel, and more potent for the lords of creation. There was delicate canary besides.

Dr. Bumblefuz dropped in about this time, not that he was partial to sandwiches or needed the stimulus of spirits, but to enjoy an intellectual and philosophical conversation.

Epaphroditus Wagge was also a guest, and, being called upon by the hostess for a toast, with hand on heart and a polite inclination toward the widow, drank, "Connu-bial felicity." The merry guests called out the curate to respond on the part of their entertainer, and the graceful youth, at home evidently in the residence of the late Mr. Stephen Snuggles, responded in a neat speech, commencing with a classical allusion and closing with a quotation from one of the fathers. Thereupon a parishioner drank to the Rev. Dapper Flummery's promotion to a bishopric, while

the widow softly and silently whispered to herself, "I hope he won't be bishop of Banglore."

Then Miss Arabella Flummery, just touching the edge of the little glass to display the whitest of teeth, put in order and replenished by an eminent dentist on her last visit to the Metropolis, proposed, "Science, especially craniological science, and its distinguished promoters." The Past High Mitre, filling the glass of the sava and slyly mixing it a "thrifle sthronger," as Patrick might say, dropped in the remark that "He was half inclined to be a convert himself, and hoped that, instead of wasting the precious hours in new games, his young friends present might be edified by some practical tests of the developments of craniums." "There, for instance," he wound up by observing "is our young friend, Miss Flummery. Perhaps she, being a proficient, will consent to be blindfolded. A committee will then select a candidate for the honor of a phrenological examination at her hands." They selected Bumblefuz.

As the widow Snuggles bound the handkerchief over the eyes of the wary Bumblefuzzer, some merry sprite whispered, "Just leave a little peep hole," and the peep hole was left. Solemn silence reigned while the committee, requesting that no one should mention the name of the gentleman who was about to be submitted to the test, led up our modern Galen, now exhilarated by the libation in honor of science and its founders. The sly minx peeped, as what woman could help doing, called upon the genius of all the Flummeries to pour the oil of blarney upon her tongue's end, and began slowly:

"A remarkable character! A stranger, doubtless. Who in Sloppery has a head like this? Benevolence seven; conscientiousness seven plus; acquisitiveness three; alimentiveness two; ideality seven; sublimity the same. A remarkable character. This head, ladies and gentlemen, presents a combination of the peculiar and distinguishing character-

istics of Bacon, Spurzheim and Dr. Franklin." Tapping the forehead, the oracle exclaimed, "Here science has its throne. The perceptive and the intellectual faculties, developed to an extraordinary fullness, indicate a mind far in advance of his species." Then, with a soft simper, the erudite enchantress ventured the remark, that, "if married, he would be one of the fondest and most faithful of husbands." The Past High Mitre could restrain himself no longer. Knowing the great man's weakness to a dot, he chimed in, "Capital! I leave it you, ladies and gentlemen, if Miss Flummery could have described the character of Dr. Bumblefuz better with her eyes open?"

Soon after, Miss Arabella Flummery was slightly indisposed, and Science paid Beauty a professional call. The windows of the boudoir, artfully darkened and shaded, cast a soft, crimson lustre on the bewitching Arabella. The county journal, containing a report of Dr. Bumblefuz's lecture on the laws of universal development, lay upon the table near at hand. The most capacious of easy chairs received the visitor. Of course, the conversation was eminently intellectual. With the invalid's privilege, the spinster's tapering fingers rested, apparently in their inadvertence, on the doctor's coat sleeve, while the languid voice murmured that "The recuperative power of ideas was truly wonderful; that in the morning she was quite an invalid. Thanks to the county journal and the mental feast which she had enjoyed, an illness of a fortnights' standing had been cured by the power of philosophy."

"Ah!" said the Doctor, "you are right Madam. It is philosophy that is to renovate the world. We develop, Madam, we develop. The future looms up like a phrenological Ararat with the ark of the progress of the species resting upon its summit. The great man, the man of the future, is yet to come."

Now Arabella, thou canst never have a better opening.

With a sigh and a blush, pressing as she speaks, in the ardor of science, a jeweled finger on the Doctor's wrist, the spinster replies, that "This man of the future, this coming man, who is to revolutionize science and renovate the race, can never appear till, instead of all this foolish nonsense about bleeding hearts, that love sick boys are guilty of, professors of phrenology are appointed in every village, for the purpose of examining the craniums of all who are candidates for matrimony, and empowered to grant licenses to such only as are suitably qualified according to the laws of craniological adaptation."

Reader, did you ever snare a trout? I hope not; and he, who attacks that prince royal of the finny tribe in this underhanded manner, should never be welcomed to purling brooks and meadows green. If you have never witnessed the process, it is after this method. The magnate is seen at the bottom of his clear pool, luxuriating in the crystal lymph and entitled to the first snap at every luscious tit-bit that the stream brings down. Slyly peering over a projecting bank, young Scape-grace, who is after him, reaches out a long rod, at the end of which is a line, sustaining a slender horse-hair noose, carefully let down into the water without a sound. While Dr. Trout is enjoying his half an hour of digestion after dinner, meditating on that last minnow, and luxuriating in the idea that he knows a hook when he sees it, in spite of May flies and gentles, this subtle snare encircles him, tickling gently the smooth sides as it moves along, producing a pleasant titillation. Then Scape-grace gives the rod a sudden jerk. He comes up, churning the water, and floundering with all his might, but concludes the soliloquy in a nice basket, doomed to remain there till Betsy, the cook, remarks "Well, you're a fat un to be sure. Missus must have you smoking hot for breakfast."

Dr. Bumblefuz was the trout, and, reader, Phrenology the

horse-hair noose. We have observed that youthful levite, the Rev. Dapper Flummery, B. A., when, in the unsophisticated innocence and budding verdure of his affections, he first entertained the thought that the widow Snuggles was a very superior person. The West India sweetmeats, the buttered muffins, and the flattering welcome, were the first masked approaches of the charmer. The ruffled pillow cases, the warming pan, the cozy fire and the lambs wool slippers basking in its glow, were so many mounds and covered ways thrown up before the walls, to prepare for storming parties, for sappers and miners, and sharp shooters, and the regular operations of a siege: but the compliment to the flute playing in the morning, accompanied with the killing look and the faint *soupc*on of a sigh,—that was the final escalade; henceforth there was no resource but to surrender at discretion.

Dr. Bumblefuz was an epicure and diner-out, and, had he lived in London, the club would have taken the place of the family circle. The tempting atmosphere of married comforts, with beautiful woman for the Fairy Queen of the supper-table, delighted with the tender cadence of the flute and secretly hoping for the day when the flutist might sing, “Life let us Cherish,” and “Home Sweet Home,” as that domesticated wonder, a loving husband,—would have been deserted for a dinner, with gentlemen only at the table, and a philosophical discussion over the wine. Perhaps the lady who now sits opposite has a suspicion of this, and proceeds to snare her tench by tickling his vanity. The Doctor is no trout, good reader, though we injured the feelings of that gay dreamer and poet of the waterfalls, by the comparison. The phrenological bust which stood upon the mantle, had it been a canary, would certainly have sung a tune entirely dissimilar to that of those little, golden mates, whom we once heard trilling their love songs to encourage the bashful pair in the parlor at Wingate Hall.

Sighing, blushing and simpering, all in one, the scientific Arabella finally wheeled out the very Mons Meg of her feminine artillery, charged for the occasion with a killing blast. "Ah! that man of the future, that coming man, destined to inaugurate the craniological millenium;—if any woman in the world was qualified to be his mother there was but one man possessed of a sufficient development of ideality, sublimity, benevolence, philoprogenitiveness, causality and constructiveness, to smile as a father upon the rising prodigy.

The Doctor ventured, allowing his hand unconsciously to approach the fingers of this artless female, to inquire the name of that favored individual; hankering for a compliment like a tench for some fat lobworm.

The spinster's face subsided in the perfumed folds of the kerchief, held till now in her hand, while she called him tyrant and begged him to leave her. "Had she not looked upon Dr. Bumblefuz as more than a man no such remark could have fallen from her lips. He must forgive the weakness; ardor for science had almost caused her to betray the heart's hidden secret." A sigh escaped the padded breast; the hand which he held trembled in his own, as if it was versed from infancy in the art proper to a physician's lady in a rural neighborhood,—that of shaking up the vials which infallible science prescribes. The well made gaiter hysterically made advances toward the sympathizing boot; and then came tears and the melting ejaculation, "Oh Bumblefuz!"

Honey and treacle sweeten many a bitter pill. The erudite lecturer was in the toils of the charmer. Here indeed was a female who had risen superior to the infantile prejudices of the sex. If ever he had occasion to select a Mrs. Bumblefuz this was the one. But who was the master spirit placed so high in the lady's estimation. Our tench gently draws the lobworm toward his oily maw.

The spinster, by this time partially restored to equili-

brium, and still with face buried in the cambric folds, heaves a succession of little sighs that melt in soft, zephyrous breathings at last. Who is the man? Is the lobworm for Doctor Tench or designed for the palate of some greater Tench of the same stream?

The physician's well trained voice now insinuates, "My dearest Madam, your penetration into character is most astonishing. Permit me then as a votary of science, one of its humblest votaries, to inquire the name of this favored individual, I might better say this exalted individual, developed by the scientific laws to occupy so eminent a place in the annals of mankind." Still after the lobworm, Doctor Tench.

Now came the acme of the scene. While one hand nervously caught the professional paw, and the head sank slowly to the coat sleeve, the other pointed to the table while the fingers nervously smote the report of the recent lecture at Sloppery by the erudite Phelim Bumblefuz, M. D. Then the gaiter once more tapped hysterically against the boot; the elegant toilet trembled in all its folds with a suspicion of hysterics; its wearer faintly murmured that "Now she was indeed miserable; that he had wrung out her bosom's hidden treasure from its depths, and was an adorable monster;" melting at the climax into the honeyed cadence, "Bumblefuz of my heart!"

Beware, Oh! reader, of the spinster of thirty-five, approaching on the weak side, the blind side, professional vanity and philosophical self-esteem. Arabella brought down her Bumblefuz, brought him to his knees. The Tench had his lobworn and was safely landed on the sands of injudicious matrimony by the hook and line.

That evening two owls came home from mousing with a too-whit, too-hoo—too-whit, too-hoo; and when they were snugly ensconced on their perch in the ivy tod, Doctor Owl remarked to his feathered spouse: "I remember, my

dear, that, when you lived in the yew tree yonder, I had the pleasure of being consulted professionally; the breast of that last tom tit for supper having impaired your delicate digestion. On finding relief through my admirable prescription of three sand lumps and a speck of gravel, grasping a feather of my left wing with your susceptible claws, the remark escaped you, that "So wise a savan must make a paragon of husbands."

"Too-whit, too-hoo—too-whit, too-hoo," responded Mrs. Dr. Owl. "Did I tell you, hubby, that if any little owlets ever called you papa, they would go sailing to the moon to feed on field-mice big as sheep, and come flying down with wings like storks, broad and white as the great Owl-King perched on the north pole, who shakes a snow storm from his feathers every time he flies abroad? Too-whit, too-hoo—too-whit, too-hoo." Mrs. Dr. Bumblefuz was, nevertheless, led into matrimony by a courtship very much like that of Mrs. Dr. Owl.

Hidden in the curtain folds, peered an invisible elf, who, leaping into the last sunbeam for a chariot, made his way to Cupid's court, and found the merry monarch resting from his labors on a bank of violets, while his Psyche hovered on airy winglets to crown him with myrtles for the night's repose. Merrily did the immortal, holding his sides the while, enjoy the recital; then, inclining to his Psyche and wafting to her lips the promise of a coming kiss, he dropt the sentence, "These two Bumblefuzzes think that they can do without us. Soon we shall find them lighting their household fire with ice drops, and pouring on buckets of water to make it blaze." Then Psyche twinkled roguish eyes, bright as fire-flies of a southern night, and, while she dutifully responded to the caress, replied: "I read in this pink honeysuckle blossom, love, that the cast will do for a baby's plaything, and the lecture serve for curl-papers."

Soon after occurred two weddings, both affording a plea-

stant relief to the monotony of village sociables; one the espousals of the Rev. Dapper Flummery, B. A., and the captivating Mrs. Susan Snuggles, relict of the late Mr. Stephen Snuggles, wine merchant; the other that of Phelim Bumblefuz, M. D., and Miss Arabella Maria Flummery. We leave the parish before the events take place, while yet the curate modestly contemplates the buxom widow, and the craniological philosopher indulges in visions of the coming man.

King Hezekiah's Temple of the Grand Consolidated Order of Ancient and Venerable Antediluvians, outgrowing the narrow accommodations of its tabernacle, up three pairs of stairs, over the tripe and bacon shop, has erected a new edifice on High-street Sloppery, called, in honor of the illustrious founder, Rameses' Palace. The grand royal goose spreads her wings above the apex, and a golden ram's horn appears conspicuously at each angle of the roof. The corner stone was laid with due solemnity, on which occasion Epaphroditus Wagge, Past High Mitre, and present Grand Arch-Chancellor, deposited in the corner stone a fac-simile of the sacred brick, after which he placed thereupon a stalk of Egyptian wheat, denoting fertility, a glass eye, typical of wisdom, and a closed padlock, emblematical of secrecy. Then the block was lowered to its resting-place by the Grand High Pickman and the Grand High Shoveler, and an ode sung, in the midst of an admiring concourse, deputations being present from King Cyrus' temple, Riverside, and King Rameses' temple, Coddlington. The event was chronicled in the County Journal and in the secret archives, the orator of the day remarking in the peroration of his address, that "No event of greater importance to the fraternity had occurred since the founding of the cities of Thebes and Ramsgate, by the illustrious potentate from whose archeological investigations the order took *its rise.*"

Nasal has gone, admiring and afflicted Ebenezer presenting to him on the eve of departure a superb copy of Cruden's Concordance, in gilt morocco, as a trifling acknowledgment of invaluable services. That devoted youth now presides over the destinies of a more capacious and dignified conventicle in the metropolis, where it is rumored that Duchesses have been observed in the pews, listening with 'wrapt attention to the honeyed, musical droppings of his tongue. This might also be inferred from a remark in one of his recently published discourses: "Could I pluck the quills of a seraphim, and dip my pen in Vesuvius for an inkstand, then would I indite, in burning letters for the universe to read, the names of those fair flowers of the female aristocracy, who flourish in perennial verdure, like roses of Sharon, beside sweet Ebenezer's purling streams."

We referred a while since to Clematis Bower, where four years ago the captivating Arabella read the character of her Bumblefuz with such marvellous accuracy. While the last wall fruit grows luscious in the sun, it is rendered melodious by the dulcet harmonies of Dapper's flute. Nearly four years have seen the Levite numbered among the Benedictines. A pattering of little feet is heard in Dapper's sanctum; a child's rattle and a doll have found their place upon an uncut number of the Ecclesiastical Review. Mrs. Dapper Flummery, late Snuggles, having been led to the hymeneal altar a blushing bride, confided shortly afterward to the Rev. Dapper Flummery, B. A., the secret of her tearful and agonized condition on the eventful night of the burning of the coach house of the mansion of Miss Deschamps. Since then the little girl who is to journey to Calcutta, much to the delight of Dapper, has crowned the connubial felicity of Clematis bower. It is to be hoped that she may never perish from the inhospitable rigors of that foreign clime, while unfeeling Rajahs, Moguls, Rupees, Juggernauts, and other heathen dignitaries, are engaged in

partaking of the festivities of Christmas night. Mrs. Dapper Flummery, B. A., remains unruffled. Tobacconist Brobose, though of late, it is said, somewhat ameliorated, still inveighs against "The wiles of artful widows, who take in young fellows like Flummery and ruin their prospects for life. Rectangle also hints mysteriously that a certain relict, whose name must not be mentioned, set her cap for him, but he was up to snuff." Sour grapes, Master Tobacconist!

Why dally by the wayside, beguiling time with such trifles as these? It is the course of human life. The bubble, that shines for one evanescent moment, and then disappears, floats side by side upon the river's brim with the great ship from over the seas, bearing a freight of human souls that shall still exist when there is no more sea forever. The stream, that now whirls in dimpling eddies, and now pauses in tranquil meadows to look at its own image reflected in the heavens, all garlanded with valley flowers, just as the gay young bride yonder, when they have twined the orange blossoms around her fair brow, lingers for one last, blushing look in the mirror, knowing all the while who awaits her below,—that stream will rush fast enough by and by, perhaps to plunge itself in cataracts of foam to its destiny, and yet to disappear from sight, all lost, yet found, in wreathing rainbows arching to the skies. Let us dally by the wayside while we can.

The halls of the old mansion on the Green are gay with the fairest flowers that ever blossomed in England's summer fields. Some are pale and slender, yet not Nile lilies; others pearly, and blue-eyed and crimson tinted, yet not camelias, or violets or roses. They are not annuals, yet undergo a yearly transformation. The frost might pinch them in the winter and still their bloom brightens from January to January. They are sometimes teary when there is no rain, but more often sunshiny when the day's bright

luminary has gone behind the clouds. Well do they thrive under the care of the modest, beautiful young florist, whose delight they are; and yet they are all to be transplanted. These are human flowers, whom we may meet, one day, in the heavens, blooming immortal; human flowers, whom the cold world has thrown out like withered weeds, to be trampled under foot; orphans and foundlings, taken one by one, as kind pity moved the heart, some from destitution, and others from shame, till four-and-twenty merry little maidens kneel every night within their pleasant dormitories, and sink to slumber safe-folded in protecting love.

But here is Marian, unaltered, save that a deeper bloom ripens in the cheek, and the starry lotos blossoms in the eyes reflect a purer glory. The step is firm, the bearing noble, for the dignity that comes with every true and heaven-sent ministration clothes her as in a sacred mantle. The mother in God of so many helpless ones, His grace visibly descends to crown the brow. In living for others her own soul sheds its earthiness, slowly maturing toward the stature of the perfection of the human angel.

The day passes, not in painting some fancy sketch upon a perishable substance. It is better thus; penciling, upon the deathless mind, pictures that make the spirit beautiful. To feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to instruct the ignorant, to reclaim the wayward, to shelter the homeless, Oh! wealth is thrice blessed when those to whom the All-wise Protector has given it in trust take delight in acting as the almoners of infinite benevolence.

To live for others is the crowning glory of womanhood. Nine-tenths of the romance of youth is a hot-bed growth, when, turning from the duties of the hour, fancy luxuriates in an unreal world. There is little reliance to be placed upon a sentiment, merely as a sentiment; but, if it stands the test of down right, persistent labor, it is proved divine. To live

for others is beautiful in the abstract ; to live for self far easier in practice. When Marian, returning from Wingate Hall, sat down at last to solitude and to God, after every effort to find her lost darling had proved ineffectual, a subtle voice whispered in the soul's ear, "This is a lesson. Cease intermeddling with the affairs of strangers. Society provides for its poor. Devote yourself to duties among those of your own station. Encourage young Bloomfield's suit ; your affectionate and clinging nature requires the manly arm to lean upon, and the husband's heart to twine around. Be sensible ; if you must indulge in day dreams, let them be rosy-tinted ; youth and beauty will pass too swiftly at best ; fill up the hours with pleasure ; enjoy them while you may."

There are two life-roads open before all, and Marian now stood at the parting of the ways. Like the Abyssinian princess,—who has left the happy valley, and, turning from gilded kiosk, perfumed fountain and all the gay delights of an existence which has no object but that of being amused, beholds before her that real world where every ounce of bread and filament of clothing must be earned by work ; where universal toil is the stern yet benignant law,—the maiden resolutely questioned the meaning of the busy scene, and then, with tearful face, looking upward for light, implored direction. What was she to do ? For what beneficent end had the Disposer of events left her at that early age, untrammelled, with fortune, with clear, executive mind, and with the heart all panting for objects on which to lavish its tenderness ?

From a life of gay and courtly ease, as prayer stirred to its depths the soul's fountain, a something, beautiful as an angel of God, standing in the highest place of the affections, seemed to recoil in abhorrence. Wealth misused had been her father's curse ; earned but not enjoyed, the useless thousands had mocked the palled senses and jaded brain. *How, having great possessions, to enter into life ? this was*

the query. There came from that bosom-oracle where God's word is written but one answer as the young girl pursued the search. "Wait, wait on God."

Going abroad at an early hour on the ensuing day a roadside cottage attracted her attention, for a wailing sound issued from the half opened door. Now again the two contending impulses spoke within. One said "You have no business with the sorrows of strangers; respect their privacy; a young lady is out of place here." The other answered "Love one another. Visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction. Keep thyself unspotted from the world." The wailing sound was repeated, and now, mingled with it came the faint moan of a little child, and the cry "My bairnie, my bairnie, must I leave thee?" On a pallet lay, as Marian entered, the widow of a Scotch weaver, an operative, employed, before his decease, in the neighboring mills. A dry, hacking cough followed. The apartment was scantily furnished, and one poor old woman, for charity's sweet sake, ministering to the dying sufferer. In the mother's arms lay a little girl, whose puny features betrayed that want had clutched at the heart from birth,—that its cradle had been sorrow and its baptism tears.

Marian saw that she had entered to be present at that mysterious scene—the passage of a soul to the immortals. No holy guide was there to point with faith, almost sight, to the Strong Man who bears earth's fainting children through the dark valley; but death had no terrors; mercifully uplifted the sufferer seemed floating away in an atmosphere of some purer element rather than wading through a cold river. Yet nature struggled. The child woke, and, frightened, began to wail. "Hush, Ailie, hush!" gasped the faint, struggling voice—"Twa ha' gone before; little Margery's body's in the kirkyard at bonnie Perth, and Sandy sleeps yonder, where I shall soon lie cauld—hush!" And now the great tears rolled down the cheek. Again

the dreadful cough. The dying woman sank back exhausted, while the babe lay sobbing on her breast. "Oh, Ailie, Ailie!" the sepulchral voice again began. "The work-house is cauldier than the kirkyard! see," pointing upward, "the gude Book is true. They're comin' for me"—the voice sank into a hoarse whisper, "Ailie, Ailie! I can't leave my child."

Marian heard and saw; and now, like some apparition of hope and dawning love, she knelt flushed with all the sacred light that comes when Heaven prompts the heart to charity. The words, so full of love that it seemed as if an angel spoke them, broke from the young girl's lips. "I am sent to claim the child, dear—to take away the last pang. Your babe shall never see the work-house. Give her to me." Lightly as a bird, that, when its cage is opened, flies away through cloudless ether where its companion calls, warbling, as it goes, a faint, low song of gratitude to the kind hand, that, lifting the latch, removes the last, frail barrier, the widow ceased to live in this world, whispering, almost in the last gasp, "God, who sent thee, bless thee!"

Every good affection that, taking shape within the breast, matures itself in full grown action, lifts the faithful doer into a clearer atmosphere and upon a sunnier mount of intellectual perception. The Scottish orphan became to Marian an unconscious prophet of destiny. The glowing, ardent bosom thrilled as the great affections that have the Infinite for their source repaid the generous kindness with a ten-fold reward. And now the Heaven-sent thought revealed a future, at once involving daily self-sacrifice and the most blissful happiness. It was to consecrate herself, with the rare powers of judgment and discrimination and the ample motherly yearnings of her young breast, no less than the wealth which seemed but golden peril till placed in the Divine hands, to the education of destitute, female children.

There are two Loves, one born of the exceeding purity

and bliss of the Divine Spirit, the other a base alloy of material instincts and of selfish greeds. Few are able, till sorrow tries and religion chastens the soul, to discriminate between them.

Eros and Anteros, of old fable, leave no heart unvisited. The purest have felt the invasions of the baser essence. The most depraved, though they have despised and spurned him, have still beheld the child of beamy pinions and golden locks, irradiate with the morning beam of heaven. The two paid Marian a visit.

First came the wily deceiver, who leads young hearts astray, and offers garlands that wither at the touch and turn to nettles on the brow. He touched, with subtle finger, the dream-chamber of the spirit, and pictured upon its walls the manly lover kneeling at her feet, and a realized Arcadia of selfish happiness with the chosen companion, reaching out in long perspective through the years. A soft and enervating atmosphere, like that which stole from Cleopatra's barge, mingled as of wine, and music, and gleams of humid eyes, and perfumes of fragrant tresses, and lovers' vows, and words that fell like torrid sunlight, invaded the unquiet mind. She woke, and the quick dream grew real for a moment in her fancy; while intrusive thoughts of a lover, alienated through this life of laboring for the destitute and the outcast, stung the heart as if a wasp had lit upon it. The future looked bleak and stony from this point of view. He was coming the next day. The pure girl trembled, blushing on the pillow. He was coming, and Oh! what years of golden bliss might hang suspended on tomorrow!

Intrusive doubts, at first like the wan mist, then growing to shape, and emerging from their obscure land like pallid ghosts to trouble her, pointed out the cold, unloving years; the cheek slowly withering; the bloom departing, the wavy tresses turning gray; the task, with declining

health, becoming difficult, of pruning the untrimmed, neglected faculties of children not her own; of seeing the sun of middle life descend upon the spinster, serving, in her faded looks, but as a jest to gay and merry girls. Then again, old age with no dear bosom on which to lean the aching temples; no strong arm to support while venturing in the shadows.

Did Eros, the true Eros, linger? came there no love-dream from bowers of the pure immortals? No, he did not linger, but stood waiting. This was the point on which decision trembled: did she feel called upon by sacred Duty to this painful, burdensome life? Conscience answered, "Yes, verily!" Could she meekly accept the path which Heaven seemed pointing out, even though it involved the giving up of the lover and the ruin of all those fresh, enchanting hopes that were making life a paradise?

How wildly throbbed the bosom, what bitter tears dissolved themselves into the pillow, the dark night hid within itself; but morning broke. At ten the young squire's horse pawed before the gate. The hand that met his touch was cold as marble, the face like that of a martyr.

One of the most exquisite of the pictures in Shelley's *Revolt of Islam* is the description of the fair child who came to Laon and Laone, after their entrance into the second life, approaching, in a self-moving bark, itself an animated existence, and only less beautiful than that sweet apparition's own "living shape and human charms." Conveyed by this aerial creature, the two leave the enchanted isle on which they first awakened, journeying, through mighty chasms and over wild, tumultuous streams, to the temple of the Supreme Spirit.

The youthful lover had hoped to find his fair mistress the same sweet child of love, and romance, and gentle sensitiveness, as when the canaries trilled their duet in the oaken parlor. When, therefore, the ice-cold fingers lay in his

palm for a moment, and were withdrawn, he exclaimed, "Marian, you have changed."

Tearfully smiling, the words came slowly from those dear lips, "Not changed, my friend, unless, as I trust, for the better."

The boy's face crimsoned. Was this the warm welcome which he had been encouraged to expect? Youthful pride took the alarm. "I am perhaps an unwelcome guest, Miss Deschamps."

Oh, faithless heart and mind, inexperienced in woman's ways! The deep, radiant eyes, doubly beautiful through a half mist of tears, conveyed an answer before the words, "Not unwelcome; never unwelcome."

The lad took courage to reply. "You are changed. Have I been so unfortunate as to give offence?"

"Offence. No, far from it."

"Why then so cold, so distant, so strange? Your hand is ice; your words sound far off. Oh, Marian, Marian, you're killing me." And now the impetuous tide broke forth. Heart, hopes, life, all, were cast at her feet; words poured like jewels, melting as they fell into flashing pictures of a lover's paradise. Panting, flushed, kneeling at her feet, while the faint morning, streaming through rich curtains, crimsoned her wan face, and the tears trickled through the hand pressing the temples and vailing the eyes, the lover ceased, almost worshipping her beauty as he took in the faultless *ensemble*.

The answer came: "I had feared all this. Nay, no kneeling; I should kneel;—I have knelt to my God. Listen: A young, willful girl, reared to indulge her own whims, was roused one stormy night to hear a little voice wailing in the snow-drifts. Finding there a foundling, she vowed to accept it as a boon from Heaven,—to shelter it from some great peril that seemed threatening its young life,—to be to it as the hand of Providence. A few days

and it became evident that the new-comer was a treasure of priceless value. The teachable spirit, the quick, comprehensive intellect, the patient, humble, reverent disposition, the rare loveliness of person, made it a joy instead of a burden, to care for her well-being. Then the finder lost her treasure, not when guarding it, but when beguiled by pleasant fancies from her home. The child was stolen in the night.

"Still listen: This young girl, whom you know, then stood still and asked forgiveness—asked that a Wiser Mind than her own might henceforth plan the future and direct each daily action. That humble petition received its response: 'I have given you health, youth and fortune, not for your own pleasure, but that your house may be a home for friendless orphans, your wealth a means for their maintenance, your mind devoted, your powers directed, to their training in the practice of virtue and the love and fear of God.'

"Perhaps the one of whom I speak had indulged in day-dreams: perhaps it cost a pang to venture on so stormy and perplexing a sea,—to say—good bye—to you." Here the true and tender heart gave way, and the voice ended in a faint, sobbing moan.

"Marian, Marian, for God's sake don't break my heart."

Slowly the reply came, at first with difficulty, the words growing more clear, more touching, more assured, as the sacred inspiration of duty swept through the spirit, touching all its chords to music, enkindling all its clouds to flame. "My father was a lover once, and vowed as fondly as ever you can. What came of it? The love that had but the desire of the eye for its support was but a momentary matter. Warm lovers become cold husbands. Do not interrupt me. This is no time for hasty words. A young girl's first duty in life is to ask her God that she may be guided in all things by His Holy Spirit. Oh! Charlie, had my conscience been

clear that I could devote myself to making your life happy, the words that you seek to utter about cruelty and inconstancy would never be spoken.

"Now, I am not going to say farewell forever. Neither of us are much more than children. Your love is not tried, nor is mine. If, seven years from to-day, each with matured character, and both resolutely and firmly bent on living for others, and striving not for our own but their good, my friend remains unchanged, let it be as God shall will. I bind you by no promise. Till then neither nay or yea."

Once more the lover made an effort to overcome this pitiless resolution. It was without avail; yet the bright glow kindled in the cheeks again and the kind hand grew warm, while suffering faith seemed radiant with tender, human love. The morning waned and still their interview continued. Now came Eros, the celestial, and while his earth-born counterfeit forever fled away, two hearts, that needed but this high discipline to blend for ever, felt the mysterious attraction of a common duty, pointing onward to a common fate.

"Marian," said Charles, "I too have a confession to make; and now listen to me. Five years ago I wrestled for months in secret with the conviction that my life's vocation was the priesthood. If I prayed by night it grew to be an agony, and, by day, unless by an effort of will removed, the presentiment that, if I ever filled my true place in the world, it must be as a teacher of religion, followed me continually. Sometimes now, and never so forcibly as at this moment, the early impression returns. I find a war in my own spirit."

The minds of these young people grew transparent to each other. Courtships that have merely the natural impulses for their fount of life are like dreams produced by opium, or the excitement of wine. The intoxication may be sweet, while it lasts, and a new Arabian Nights of

gorgeous imagery may fill the waking hours of both with an imagined happiness. Duties may grow stale and irksome, while each anticipates the bridal altar and the honeymoon; but, alas! the play is soon over, the guests gone, the brilliant lights extinguished, and the hollow stage remains, while the faded actors bicker, perhaps, in weariness of each other, behind the scenes.

"Charles," said Marian, "answer me one question—To whom do we owe our first duty?" There was no excitement, no enthusiasm, in the reply; perhaps a tone of sadness; it was frank nevertheless—"First, to God."

The lovely questioner went on, "How do you suppose He teaches us?" Again the reply came no less explicit: "Accepting the Bible as God's word, I must respond, That is the oracle. Of course from a worldly point of view I should say otherwise; consult expediency, personal interest and pleasure."

"But, my friend, what does the Bible mean when it tells us to forsake all things for Christ; father, mother, husband, wife, children, houses, lands?"

The color mounted to the young man's cheek. "It means, if interpreted in a plain, unequivocal manner, that we should hold all things secondary to the first great end; living to do God's will, with singleness of heart, in whatever vocation he has selected for us."

"But, once more, how shall we know what the vocation is? and now answer from the deepest thought."

"By the Holy Spirit of God, moving upon the conscience, enlightening the understanding, and quickening the affections. This at least is the doctrine of faith upon the subject."

"Now, then, Charles Bloomfield, your true words are my resolutions. If you hear that Marian Dechamps is founding a convent or becoming an avowed recluse, remember all that she has said. I look on marriage as a holy

ordinance, not lightly to be entered into, yet, when God gives the fitting associate, as blessed, and thrice blessed. Those only have reason to expect God's blessing on their union, who, faithful to the inspirations of duty, wait His own time. Till you, in calm deliberateness, have decided on acting in accordance with conviction, and devoting your life, without regard to questions of expediency or self-interest, to whatever calling the Divine Spirit indicates, courtship would be but a temptation. I require all the strength which comes through prayer, to walk, with unfaltering feet, onward, in my solitary way. You require the proof of separation in order to decide, without bias from my inclinations, what your course of life should be. Go, then, Charlie. When our seven years of noviciate have expired, if we both relapse into the love of the world, you will have learned to look on this affection as a boy's folly. Perhaps we both may. If, at the end of that time, our souls have grown, in God's ways, purer, wiser and better, the ripened judgment and the steadfast will having learned to hold all things as secondary to Heaven's purposes, you ask for Marian, that secret oracle which moves my steps bids me say, 'Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.'

Shall we venture on adapting a text of Holy Writ to that parting: "They wept sore, and fell on each other's necks, and kissed each other, sorrowing for the words which they spake, that they should see each other's faces no more."

CHAPTER XVIII.

FAITH AND UNBELIEF.

There is a legend in America which runs somewhat after this manner: In the most disastrous period of their Revolution, when, encamped in Winter quarters at Valley Forge, the Continental Army had dwindled to a scanty handful of starving, freezing, discontented, almost disheartened men, the illustrious Washington, seeking guidance from Heaven, used to spend a portion of every day in the seclusion of the woods, in prayer, finding thus superhuman guidance. Young Bloomfield, with a heart almost bursting with grief, like one to whom familiar things had become unreal, halted his horse in a clump of woodland on the way, entered the thick coppice, knelt beneath an ancient beech whose sheltering branches kept a little spot secluded from the snow, and there the spirit of his youth returned with sevenfold power. He prayed for the resolution to forget Marian, if it was God's will; to receive wisdom to decide upon his own vocation, in freedom from the spell of her beauty, the fascination of her voice; and then for grace to be content with any lot.

It was the Winter of his hopes. The young birds that make music in the breast were dumb. Anteros, with his baleful spell, had fled away, while the true Eros lit only an invisible flame. Then musing, as the good steed took its own pace without the guidance of the rider, first came the thought, I am unworthy of her. She, but a slender girl, *can brave the world, and sacrifice her youth for a guiding*

inspiration. I had the inspiration; a man; it met me as I crossed the threshold and entered into youth. Then he fell passionately, as is the habit of noble natures who have indulged in weakness, to despising himself, calling the heart a coward, and shaming the reason for arguing against its own most sacred lights and oracles.

Yet irresolution, passion and weak misgivings all fled, when, entering the drawing-room, the two sisters met him with a mute, inquiring look. At dinner the old squire rallied the absent-minded youth,—the self-indulgent father idolizing the handsome son, and hoping soon to behold his old friends and neighbors at a merry marriage-feast. When, after their retirement for the evening, the fond mother asked the husband if he had noticed a grave, melancholy look in their boy's countenance, the jolly knight, chucking the dame under the dimpled double chin, gave way to laughter, "Not he. The young fellow was assuming dignity. It was always the way with the Bloomfields in the courting season. He recollected coming home on a similar occasion, sitting in the same place at the table, and putting on the same air of manly importance, when his father had rallied him. It ran in the family. Aye, twenty-five years from that time, with Charlie's son sitting in the same place, Charlie himself, at the head of the table, while a new generation of the Bloomfields surrounded it, would behold the gay young fellow sipping at his sherry with a philosophical air and taking soup majestically, as their boy had just done.

The elderly couple had done their best to spoil the only son and heir; pride of their eyes, idol of their hearts. Fair as was the promise of his youth, the tares were lurking amidst the springing wheat. The petted, pampered boy, the high-spirited, adventurous youth, threatened to become a man of burning passion and of determined will. Gentle, ever gentle, to the fond mother, and a gallant knight to the sisters who leaned upon the manly arm, the delicate and

exquisitely moulded frame was still the habitation of a Power which sometimes spoke in tones that made those who heard it tremble.

The youth grows up at home, the father never suspects what is lurking in the boy's breast, the mother even but in part divining the quality of his genius, the fashion of the faculties, the end and purpose of the destiny. Tender sisters laugh at the bursts of boyish enthusiasm. Perhaps, a stranger among his kin, they wonder blindly at the first, faint tokens of the force that is to shape a nation's destiny, the thought that is to grow at last into world-wide philosophy, to revolutionize science, to enkindle a second youth upon the faded cheek of art, to stir nation against nation, or to link great empires in bonds of stable peace.

We have witnessed the youth who left his father's home in the morning, intent on wooing a beautiful singing bird to come and rest within his bosom, and warble there with gay and festive song, returning as one who in the path had met and held communion with an angel. All slept in the household, but the young heir who paced the garden walks, now lightly feathered with flakes of snow. The seven years of waiting melted away, sparkling at last like a dew drop on the pure threshold of an eternity of wedded happiness, first found on earth, but consummated in the endless years of Heaven. "Aye," exclaimed the youth, "she cherishes no illusion. This is my destined mate, for the same high purpose descends to both of us. Why do I love her? What is it in me that loves? Oh, Marian! it is thy pure spirit, calling to its companion, drawing me as a planet that seeks to lead from chaos and dull night its own appointed and kindred star."—Yet why that long drawn sigh? The night grew chill, a cloud came over the young moon; it dropt below the horizon veiled in mist; sweet vesper followed it. The wind sighed as if to echo the

aspiration of his breast. Then came temptation, deliberation and decision.

Reason, or a better power, that makes of reason its throne, now calmly presented, one by one, the crosses that must be borne, the trials that must be met, the weeds to be uprooted from the garden beds of the heart, the discipline to be exacted of the ease-loving mind,—a father's disappointment and anger, the tearful pleadings of a mother, the ridicule of friends,—and then no more dreaming in these lovely woodlands, no more weaving of aerial palaces in the mind's loom chamber ; for daily associates those from whom the refined taste might shrink repulsed, poor, toiling men, care worn and slatternly women, the sick, the vicious, the unfortunate of every degree.

The young man's heart sank within him and he felt "I cannot bear this burden." Then the great vision of the cross and One stretched upon it whose wan face irradiated the night and filled the darkness with noonday,—the cross with all its sacred symbols, and the thought of who He was who suffered thus, and why He suffered, and how He arose from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, and giving His servants charge to preach the Gospel, declared, 'Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world,'—it rose : it grew to be a vast, embodied majesty in his mind's sight. The young head was bared ; the breast heaved ; sinking on the bended knee, the earnest, pleading voice exclaimed, "Oh, God ! who didst veil Thyself in human shape to conquer the world's sin and wretchedness, take me ; do with me as seemeth good. I thought to undertake this in my own energy. Without Thee I am but as one of these dry leaves crushed under foot."

So Ridley and Latimer prayed, and went, in the morning, to the blazing faggots, clothed and perfumed as a bridegroom to the bride. So that God-fearing priest, John Wesley, when the cry of hopeless millions broke upon the soul's

ear, calmly emerged from his communion chamber to the work that lit the dark places of the Isles with household pentecosts. Thus the crisis passed. God called him. No music dropped audibly from circling stars that watched the scene; yet true souls may well divine that the innumerable company of the faithful were glad that another was found to stand, where saints and martyrs had fought the battle of good against evil, in days before.

Troubles drop down upon families, often, like Summer frost upon the gay parterre. The sun sets in bright gold; the moon sails through clear azure; there is no wind to shake a peal of elfin laughter from some dew-dripping blossom's painted cup. Death nips the flowerets for all that. In the morning the crisp frost betrays a season's blight.

Frost fell that winter eve on the indoors garden at Wingate Hall. Calmly and bravely, in the quiet of her own room, at an early hour of the ensuing day, holding his mother's hand the while, the quiet, resolute young man told the story of his courtship; how Love came to his heart and planted there; how the tiny budlings peeped above the soil, growing at last to be flowers of paradise; how sweet birds came to make the branches glad with unearthly melodies; how he lay down to dream beneath the tree of the garden, and saw in sleep

"The Queen of that lovely place,
The soul of the blossoms, their fairest grace,"

hovering to crown the brow with myrtles; and how he woke to clasp an airy nothingness, while the Spirit of the Frost contemplated the night's ruin, the leaves all fallen, the buds all blasted, the birds dead upon the boughs.

The gentle mother sighed, yet wondered; for passion vents itself, when disappointed, in windy sighs, and gusts of grief, and railings, and curses, content at last to dash its idol from the shrine and grind the features all to powder *beneath the foot.*

Then the young man narrated the reasons that Marian assigned for this present rejection of his suit; told how, in place of the mortal love which had vanished from the breast, the glorious immortal had followed; how his life was transfigured in the light of sacred Duty; how, for five long years, unsuspected, all that was good and noble within him had seemed responding to a divine call to preach God's word; how, fearing to bring a cloud upon his father's face, a shadow upon the family circle, this guiding oracle had been neglected, till, as youthful passion drooped its wing and sank to sleep amidst the blighted dream-flowers of the breast, a star was shining above in the mind's sky,—the star of faith and love,—the star of the cross, leading him on to offer the wise man's gift of all life's precious things, at His feet, who once was found in the manger of Bethlehem.

The dame had hoped another future for her son. Misled by the world's standard,—its false standard of greatness, it was an easy matter to contemplate the lowly toil of the self-sacrificing priest as better fitted for the child of poverty than for the youthful heir of fortune and an old name. But the girlish enthusiasm returned as the latent fervor of the orator, the burning words of the servant of the temple, gathering strength sentence by sentence, and issuing from the young man's lips, marshalled themselves in fiery sentences around her.

Oh, foolishness of preaching! which no art can imitate; which no philosophy can unravel; which copes against the roused force of all earth's dangerous illusions, and strips away, fold after fold, the cloudy curtains of the Unseen Land;—gift which God sends; which, if rightly used, is made the agent in revolutionizing character and reclaiming human brutes from the carnage of their kind; which, if abused, blasts the brow as with unutterable fire; which comes to the lowly and to the learned alike, and, awayed

by invisible Omnipotence, moves like the wind, that goeth where it listeth, and drops, like the dew upon the mown grass, or showers that water the earth. Oh, sacred power! surviving the knowledges that have ceased and the tongues that have passed away, to share its reign with charity that never faileth,—it was thine to argue through the young man's heart! the mother became the first convert of the son.

The English country gentleman ripens in his place, grows rotund and rubicund, inherits in youth the family health and good looks, succeeds, at the father's demise, to the estate, and then, with advancing years, to the hereditary gout, or apoplexy. Squire Bloomfield had hitherto enjoyed the pleasantnesses of his position; now approaching infirmities cast a shadow before hand. Waxing choleric and indignant when the fond mother narrated as much as she deemed prudent of the son's courtship, family pride arose, till a sharp twinge in the right foot directed the torrent of denunciation from the girl to the bootmaker and the weather. As the storm subsided the lady ventured to hint, in the most gentle and considerate manner, that their son meditated the propriety of taking holy orders. Then the pent-up tempest became at once a hurricane.

It was of no avail to argue and tears provoked a fiercer outbreak. The son was summoned to the father's presence. Bolstered in an easy chair, with the offending limb swathed in flannel and pillowed on a stool, the wrath of the Bloomfields glared from the indignant eyes of their representative. The young man respectfully stood by his father's chair mutely waiting for age to make its inquiries.

"Well boy,—oh! that bootmaker and his tight fit!—well boy, so that minx of the Deschamps has jilted you! I was jilted myself on one occasion and avenged myself by marrying your mother. Served her right. Take my advice. Carry your impudent face to the handsomest girl in the county, provided she is of a good family and your mother

and myself have no objections. Take the outposts by storm like a brave Bloomfield, and then hey for the wedding. Oh! that lumbago in my great toe."

The mother interposed mildly, "Charlie is too good a boy, I know, to bring any one into the family without your consent."

Heeding not this soothing, coaxing voice,—where manner said more than words,—the stout gentleman suddenly turned in his chair, "Harkee, my son, have I ever crossed you in any of your fancies?—that aggravating foot,—will it never have done?—What's this I hear about your turning parson?"

Youth and age seldom looks upon events with the same eye. One beholds the bud that is to blossom, the other the leaf withering to its fall. It is difficult to reason a question of duty, involving the most sacred of ethics, with a testy gentleman who ceases his argument that he may denounce an incipient sciatica. The young man replied, "I have always sought to be an obedient son. It is now five years since I have entertained the feeling that God's Providence was calling me to a sacred function."

The rising anger mounted to the face, while the father exclaimed, "It's hardly five years since you were breeched, Sir. Talk to me about a call to be a parson! Zounds, I'll disinherit you if this folly is repeated. Parson Bloomfield, let me wish your reverence good morning."

The nervous fingers of the son were set into the palms with the effort at self-control. Without speaking, bowing respectfully to one parent, pressing his lips to the forehead of the other, he sought the door, when the head of the family called out, "Take Moll's black riding skirt, and a white cravat of your own for bands, borrow Dick the coachman's wig, mount the hall table, and we'll ring the dinner bell, call up the servants, and listen to a moderate preachment."

Choking down each rising emotion, the youth turned, lifted the clear brown eyes, confronted the angry squire's pride with meek humility, and answered, "I am your son. God forbid that a son should ever speak otherwise than in the language of respect to a kind and honored parent. But hear me. Often have you said that a Bloomfield should make his mark; that if I chose a career, either the army or the navy was at my option; that a few years of serving my country would be no bad discipline. Permit me, Sir, to obtain that discipline in serving my God. How can I serve my country best? At mess table, in time of peace, with the routine of a daily parade, wearing a scarlet uniform, and conducting a score or a hundred of men through the manual exercise, or in rousing souls from vice and ignorance to become God's soldiers in the fight against sin and satan. The estate is yours, nor do I presume to dictate the disposal of it; but conscience is my own. I owe it to the God who will judge us all to keep it clean. Father," and here the mellow voice melted, "father, when we both are where Wingate Hall shall be but a memory, I would rather stand in the presence of our fathers, a soldier of God, worn from a hard life in fighting His battles, than go there to say that I added all England to the family estate, and all its titles to the good, old name."

Parents have no objection to spirit in their sons, provided the keen rapier does not flash against their own failing blade. A ring at the lodge gate announced an approaching carriage and visitors, and the youth was dismissed with the testy answer that "No parson should ever stand in his shoes."

On the ensuing morning, mounted on a stout roadster, Peter Styles was dispatched with polite missives to Squire Bloomfield's three most valued friends and neighbors, Squire Brompton of the Priory, Squire Appleby of Chester Lodge, and Squire Drone of Turnagain Hall; the mother

taking advantage of the clear, frosty day, to drive in the pony carriage, as far as Riverside Rectory, seeking there advice, in this critical juncture, from Dr Hartwell.

If you wish an opinion of a German invite him to metaphysics and Bavarian beer; accost a Frenchman, with a polite bow, between the acts, in a stall at the opera. To extract wisdom from the American, whittle with him; but your true Briton can best be approached after dinner. He becomes oracular when the cloth is removed, the ladies vanished, and the host remarks that "the bottle stands with him." Behold then Squire Bloomfield, in his perplexity, summoning the sagest and most profound of counsellors, and opening to them, in solemn conclave, the singular infatuation of his son.

While capacious wisdom fills three good arm chairs, and waits, glass in hand, to hear the case propounded, let us sketch, in hasty outline, the characters at hand. Squire Appleby is round and oily; an excellent judge of fat cattle, Durham's and Alderneys; a taker of premiums at county fairs; an exhibitor of prize oxen, and learned in grasses as King Nebuchadnezzar of old fame. We have seen Squire Drone before, dozing in his pew, under the infliction of a Christmas sermon; to delineate his prominent traits would require the combined descriptive powers of a game-keeper and a whipper-in. As becomes the most thorough going fox hunter in the county he is long winded. A Nimrod of sportsmen,—were he asked the chief end of man, the reply would be to hunt foxes before dinner, and to imbibe Port and Madeira after. His philosophy is at once simple and perspicuous; the earth has been created for the purpose of affording burrows for foxes, warrens for rabbits, parks for deer, streams for salmon and otter, and country seats for English Squires. The chief end of parliament is to keep up the game laws. Poaching, in this philosopher's estimation, is entitled to rank among the seven deadly sins. The

books in his library most frequently consulted are Hoyle's Games and the Complete Farrier. Too intent on country sports to intermeddle in great questions of the state, the Drones of Turnagain Hall have waxed fat and flourished from time immemorial. Hugh Brompton, the elder, gazing as he does, while the neglected glass stands idle, as if the old cattle piece above the sideboard were some rare work of art, suffers rather than enjoys the hospitalities. Rubens would have delighted in the rich coloring, Vandyke in the noble presence. The old blood of the Somersets mantles in the veins, while, through the gentle feminine side, which often gives the genius without the name, he claims alliance with those Wallingfords who once ruled Riverside. Many a tradition survives to attest how sire transmitted to son the love of honor and of arms, of fidelity to chartered liberty, and of devotion to the reformed faith. Since the days of the Restoration the Devereux's have succeeded to the alienated estates, while in its male representatives the name is here extinct.

They were conversing, before the cloth was removed, of old traditions; one distich in particular, often quoted by cotters and yeomen, affording matter for discussion;

"When Sloppery Hamlet parts the fen
The Wallingfords come home again."

For two hundred years this legend seemed in danger of never being verified in either of its lines, but Sloppery Hamlet was now becoming a thriving market town and seven years of growth at the present rate would see the high street extending across the valley. Drone mentioned that in his boyhood the proverb used to run,

"When Richmanstown has crossed the fen,
Young Wallingford is home again."

Squire Bloomfield remarked that appearances seemed to indicate that Dr. Bushwig would succeed to the earldom

before that time, while the jolly Squire of Chester Lodge suggested that the saying simply was designed to express the idea that an old family, once rooted out, never returned to its honors, arguing that no one supposed, in the time of Charles the Second, that Sloppery, then but a farm stead-ing in a marsh, could ever become what it was now, and that it was equally impossible for the Wallingfords, banished from the country, to regain possession of Riverside.

"It is a pity," observed Squire Brompton, "that we have no trace of our cousins. I well remember to have heard my grandfather, in his extreme old age, narrating the account which his father had given of Sir Miles Wallingford's farewell to Riverside. It was in the mad uproar of the first days of the Restoration. Sir Miles, a general in the army of the Commonwealth, and one of the ablest counsellors of the Protectorate, was now unmarried, and already began to show silver hairs. Calling together the family servants and summoning all the tenants of the estate, calmly as if going on a day's journey, he made known to them that a swift messenger from London had brought the tidings that his life was to be forfeited to glut the vengeance of King Charles; that the estates were to be forfeited, and that they were to see him no more.

"Then, passing from one to the other, grasping the hands of the stout troopers who had stood by him in fight and skirmish, tenderly bidding adieu to the weeping wives and daughters, and taking the young children in his arms and blessing them, the knight made his way to the great entrance, where the good steed already pawed the ground. Rising in the stirrups and bowing the head, while the low sobs of three hundred, whose fathers had served his fathers, were hushed that they might listen, he bade them trust in God till the dark days were over; and then added that which grew afterward into the distich: 'Men come back to their rights. The trunk may fall, but if the root lives, the

young oak thrives where the old one perished. Perhaps when the fens become firm land, over the Richmanstown causeway, your children may yet behold the Wallingfords' return.'

"Now, added the narrator, "here is a singular coincidence. Having occasion recently to consult old family records, my steward discovered that the farm steading of Sloppery, supposed to have been alienated to Lionel Devereux, the first earl of Riverside, was originally an outlying estate of Brompton Manor, and passed to the Wallingfords through intermarriage in the time of Henry VII. It was then valued at a rental of only twelve marks. So strictly was it secured that the attainder of the Wallingford holding it, by the act of settlement, could not alienate it from either branch of the family. It descends in the male line, and, by the wording of this instrument, the representative of the Bromptons becomes trustee, holding it to perpetuity, should no male descendant of the Riverside family appear as claimant. In the troublous times of the Restoration the holding passed, with the rest of the great estate, to the present family, who have parcelled it out on leases for three lives. My attorney has commenced a suit against the trustees of the late Earl, and, God helping me, it shall be held till the old knight's prophecy is verified. The Richmanstown causeway is the ancient marsh road, now called Highstreet, and, as the leases drop, the improvements now making will enhance the value of the estate to a clear five thousand a-year." After the cloth was removed, the glasses were filled and emptied to the Wallingfords return.

Hugh Brompton, Esq., of the Priory, is neither a Drone or an Appleby. As now and then one meets, amidst clumps of modern firs and larches, with some stately oak, that witnessed archers, with arrows a cloth yard long, lying in wait for the fallow deer, so this type of the era when Spenser sang and Surrey loved and Raleigh bore the flag of Eng-

land over western seas, remains amidst the scions of a more earthly generation. Had he been a younger son instead of an elder and only one, had some great sentiment stirred his youthful nature, some keen sorrow cleft it, the dreamer and the scholar might have been wise in council, prompt in action, and valiant with the strong right arm, wielding either broad sword or pen. As it is, life has been dozed away in affluent and luxurious seclusion, till a worldly crust gathers about what yet remains of noble aspiration. A civil war, a famine, a pestilence smiting down the land, might perhaps call out whole columns of latent energies, but the man of leisure loves the refined enjoyments of the library and the garden, the picture gallery and the pinery too well, as he imagines, to be moved by less.

This was the synod summoned to consult upon young Bloomfield's clerical aspirations. The perplexed father stated the case, "Zounda, that boy of mine came the other day into the study, and vowed that he would be a parson. I took the lad by himself and calmly reasoned the matter, but he became excited, and raved as if mounted on a preaching-tub in some conventicle."

Drone paused in the act of lifting the wine glass; jolly Squire Appleby dropped his pipe; while our friend of the Priory smiled a dry, epicurean smile, thinking perhaps of the day dreams of his own youth, that evaporated in the arid light of worldly prudence.

Had the young gentleman been sowing wild oats among gay companions of his own age, and finishing the education which a self-indulgent father had begun when the rosy boy came in with the nurse to sit on the knee and sip sweet wine from a glass of his own after dinner,—graduating, with jockeys, figurantes, blasé and hollow roués, high-bred gamesters and low-bred champions of the ring for professors in the art of ruin made easy, the trio could have given good advice. It is less difficult to raise a man up who sinks

below our level, than to pull one down who has risen above it. Drone could suggest nothing better than field sports, and opined that, had the lad followed the hounds twice a week, and dipped into the turf a little, such vagaries never would have troubled him. Squire Appleby suggested a course of scientific agriculture. The only drop of comfort was in Squire Brompton, who quietly observed, when the rest were at their wit's end, "Leave him alone. Studies, such as he must apply himself to, can do no harm. Experience of the world, such as inevitably will befall him, may serve as a valuable lesson. If he takes orders, a year or two's fagging in some parish in a manufacturing town will drive the lad home to marry a fine girl, and discharge the obligations that he owes, in rearing a new generation of Bloomfields to fill their station with honor to themselves and to the old families with whom they are connected. If the worst comes to the worst, he must be pushed and made a bishop of, as soon as possible. One of the Bloomfields was a Mitred Abbot about the close of the Wars of the Roses, so there is a precedent in his favor."

Dr. Hartwell sat,—a grandchild standing at the knee, while the young heart drank eagerly in the beautiful lesson from the Gospel, touching the care which our Lord exercises over the lilies of the field. Age and infancy are near akin. The child's heart is fresh and humble, open to receive, facile to be moulded by eternal verities. The good, old man, ripening in godliness toward the innocence of Heaven, becoming artless and tender as the Divine Spirit purifies and exalts the soul, is finally a realization of the innocence which the child but seems. During infancy the evil passions that invade the breast are dormant, and waiting, unless conquered, to become the masters of the spirit; but, when the gray hairs appear, after a life of service to God and man, those passions have been subdued, and are

on the verge of extirpation. Therefore the second innocence becomes the fitting teacher of the first.

As the Rector greeted a valued friend and parishioner, the perplexity which lingered in the mother's heart was overcome by the holy atmosphere. That her child verily believed himself moved, by the Holy Spirit, to become a teacher of the truths that ennoble and beautify our human life, and that make men rich to eternity, narrated, as it was, with embarrassment, and coupled with a husband's anger and opposition, gave the Rector no pain. Nevertheless, however the secret heart may have rejoiced, the prudent lips advised caution.

"To nurse enthusiasm," said Dr. Hartwell, "into a hot-house growth, is dangerous and evil. The life of a priest, if faithful, requires more than mortal fortitude. The spirit must be clad in complete armor of faith and patience to fight the good fight. Your son is no common character; thwart him not; it may be laying rash hands on sacred vessels. Counsel him to act with due circumspection, avoiding heat, and searching the soul to see that it harbors no ambitious motives. Unless this plant is of Heaven's sowing it will wither as it grew."

Encouraged by the sympathy of her venerable friend, the mother narrated the story of her son's courtship and its conclusion. At the name of Marian Deschamps the soul of the aged priest stirred within him. For a moment the lips moved as if in silent worship, before he spoke, "The mistake of Rome was in prohibiting marriage for the clergy. Without woman's influence man grows harsh and unloving. Human intellect never flowers and bears genuine fruit in perfection till the understanding of the husband is fructified through the affections of the wife. Yet Rome was right in the tenet that a Divine call is laid no less upon the woman than upon the man. Unless I sadly misinterpret God's written Word, it teaches that the sexes are made two

from the beginning; that whatever be the genius or the function of a man, were marriages invariably contracted with the Holy Spirit for guide, the wife would be endowed with such traits of character as to blend harmoniously with the husband's spirit in his vocation.

"I do not mean that a poet's wife must write poetry, or an artist's paint pictures; but that the quality of her affections will be such, that, as the husband feeds his soul upon her love, she will nourish each growing, mental faculty, and so be made one with him in the work which God ordains.

"Your son has been moved for five years with the conviction of a sacred call to preach God's Word among the poor. The noble hearted girl to whom he is attached is animated by a kindred impulse. Were they in the Romish communion, the one would become a monk, and impair his fine powers in a perpetual effort at extirpating affections that root themselves in the central principle of life. Were Marian of the same faith her mansion would become a nunnery; its corridors be paced by veiled, wan recluses; she, too, tearing at the heart under a mistaken sense of duty, and offering the bleeding tendrils as an acceptable oblation to Him who requires not sacrifice but obedience. The Protestant Churches have forgotten to a good degree that the priesthood is no less feminine than masculine. Hence the Sister of Mercy is looked upon almost with contempt.

"I see, as the light of God's Providence illuminates the coming days, that the real truth which survives in Rome, the truth of a double priesthood in the sexes, will come forth to clasp and embrace the doctrine which our own church insists upon,—the sacredness of clerical marriage. Moved by the Providence of God, the youth, summoned by the especial movement of the Holy Spirit to minister in *eternal things*, will find the maiden trained as a mother in God,

weaned from the perilous service of self and of the world, and so qualified to become a true helpmeet,—both prompted by unity of impulse and laboring to identity of end.

“He who has formed us to love and be loved reserves to Himself a secret mode of dealing with human hearts. While Marian’s spirit and employment ripens, bid your son God speed in the arduous duties of his training. The seven years that seem so long to him, as we know, are soon over. Leave these lambs of His fold to follow the Shepherd as they will.”

Returning to the Squire, now somewhat mollified, the prudent lady waited until the result of the after-dinner synod was duly made known. Finding that her husband, persuaded by the advice of his friend from the Priory, was now willing that the young man should be qualified for Holy Orders, in the hope that the arduous labors of the profession would create disgust, the mother silently consented; yet the sad days came nevertheless. The wrath, averted now from the bootmaker and the son, was concentrated upon the unlucky girl to whose blandishments the Squire attributed the unprecedented hallucination which had overtaken the hope of the Bloomfields; he pronounced her the cause of the entrance of dissension and trouble into a happy family, and prohibited his daughters from ever calling at her door. Before the first mild weather of the spring occurred the robbery, one of whose sad consequences was the arrest of Peter Styles upon the charge of being concerned in it as an accomplice. When the tender, patient wife, after her husband’s disappearance from the country, felt the shadow which had fallen upon his good name coldly clouding her own fate, and Marian, ever a friend in need, had taken both child and mother under the shelter of her own roof, the estrangement became still more complete. Soon after, without a word of parting with the beloved, the young lover left his father’s house,—left it with a mother’s

blessing, amidst the tears of the gentle sisters, while the indignant father felt it incumbent on his part to allow no expression of affection that might encourage the son to hope for a change of opinion. Partings are sad when all the circle that must be left unite in prayers and well wishes; doubly sad when we depart from the once happy home, knowing that some whom we have left behind consider the undertaking most precious to the heart as a freak of fancy. It was needful discipline.

Let us moor the bark in one more dimpling eddy ere the stream grows rapid and bears the voyager onward to the fated end; for, hark! already comes a noise of pent-up waters, tearing their way through iron-bound chasms a little further on. Still let us linger, while yet the rivulet reclines amidst the meadows and crowns its brow with springing flowers.

The night is balmy with the promise of returning spring, and tender, whispering voices mingle with its breath. The Pleiades appear to listen from their eternal round, pouring forth a double portion of their sweet influence; the "evening star, the lover's star," is setting in the west; and see, Orion marches in the ascendant with his burning brand.

Who dally in these boxwood alleys? who pause at last where the hedgerow bounds the summer garden from the lane? The one is Hugh Brompton the younger. The tender, blushing face, beaming like one of Guido's Madonnas in this mystic light, is that of Mary Bloomfield.

The window curtains, half withdrawn, revealed a charming scene within the gate-keeper's lodge. The good man, after a stout day's labor, sat by the cheerful fire in his arm-chair. Little Moll, a daughterling in her second year, now with chubby feet bare, and clad in white sleeping raiment, was cuddling in her father's arms; the pleasant, happy-hearted matron singing a Scotch ballad, while bustling

around the apartment and putting things in order for the night. Happiness surely had taken up its lodging in that humble abode. The two listened;—the song was simple and rude, but had a world of meaning in it,—involuntarily drawing closer to each other, as the melody woke responsive chords trembling from heart to heart:

When winter days are bleak and chill,
And winter nights are dreary,
I wander o'er the moorland hill,
And muse upon my dearie.

She has nae siller in her hand,
Her feet with toil are weary,
Yet not a lady in the land
So charming as my dearie.

All whitely fall, thou winter snow !
My heart is more than cheerie;
For o'er the moorland hills I go
A courting of my dearie.

She's waited through the gloaming long,
Her blushing cheeks are teary;—
But knows my step and hears my song,
And soon I'll clasp my dearie.

“Wife,” exclaimed Peter, “I’ve been thinking. Lift you the baby to her crib, and then I’ll tell the thought.” Two dimpled arms were raised to the mother’s neck, two rosebud lips put out to be kissed, and a lisping voice, just learning to speak, in accents precious as whispers from the skies, murmured: “Ting Tleepy Molly, Mamma.” Withdrawing the charmer from the father’s caress, the happy mother responded—

SLEEPY MOLLY.

Sleepy Molly blinking
 On her father's breast,—
 Roguish eyes a-winking
 For their feathered nest.

Nothing ill shall harm her;
 Angels watch above.
 Sleep thou pretty charmer;
 Blossom of our love.

Tired of summer pleasure,
 Tired of winter play,
 Sail in sleep, thou treasure,
 To the skies away.

Wife and children, burdens that the bachelor fears; blessings that the good man prays for; germs of a household heaven beyond the grave, where natural affections, cleansed from all earthly stains by superhuman love, become a part of the saint's felicity,—the two who watched in silence that quiet scene felt the charm. Mary was the first to turn away with a full heart and with a dewy eye. Had both waited a moment longer they might have heard Peter Styles' thought, might have seen, what perhaps had not escaped Hugh Brompton's keen glance, a gipsy lad drowsily nodding in the corner. "Wife," said the laborer, as with reverend care he lifted the great Bible with the brazen clasps from its place, and sought the evening chapter, "Wife, this Martin is a handy lad. Let us try and see if we cannot make a Christian of him. A bit of schooling will do him no harm. There is a place for him to sleep in the loft at night, and a bit of clothing now and then and a seat at the table we shall never miss. What says thee, lad? Wilt give up laying snares for Squire Brompton's partridges, and come and stop with us." The eyes twinkled with a sinister gleam, which the worthy Wesleyan mis-

took for satisfaction. A wicked thought, harbored in the mind, betrayed itself in that sly twinkle. Soon after the pair besought God's blessing on their humble roof, and a cleansed heart and purified conscience for the young trampler to whom they had kindly given shelter.

The night is waxing chill. It is time to part; and yet the words which the honest youth knows not how to express betray themselves in gestures that find voice to murmur, "Linger a moment;" yet at last they come:—"Mary, I am about to leave you for a tour to the Continent. Will you think of me when I am gone?"

The blue eyes swim with tears and look a mute and tender reproach, as if they said, "Can you ask if we are forgetful?"

The lover continues: "Ever since we were children, Mary, and played together, there never has been a day in which your image has been absent from my heart. I was your little knight of old. Mine is not the eloquence of words, but, Mary, I love you. Here or across the seas makes no difference. You have all my heart, such as it is." The young Squire had premeditated and rehearsed, on his way, a speech full of rhetoric, but Cupid slyly passed some dewy blossom across the memory's tablet and left a blank for the heart to fill up.

Mary steals one look, only one; crimson; tries to speak; her words fail; she trembles on his arm. He needs no other answer. That look disclosed all; he is beloved. Still waits, still shines the evening star. These two human dew-drops can never separate any more, and, when they exhale from the flower cup of this dear mother earth, their fragrant essences will rise together.

Though Hugh Brompton the younger may never fill a place in the world's annals, he possesses the large, practical sense that fits a man to be thrifty and successful in his own affairs, a wise counsellor in trouble and a true friend in

need. Mary Bloomfield understands him better and loves him more sweetly than do many wives their husbands after years of married life. From the time when Mary used to feed the young ducks and chickens in the poultry yard, herself not taller by more than a head than the old turkey-gobbler, by some innate love she has been attracted to all the mysteries of housewifery, just as the ducklings have sought their element in the neighboring pond. The two young people possess the same affection for rural life and its kindly employments. Their romance is toned down in its expression; yet, nevertheless, though it may glow less vividly in the hues of fancy and build castles less gorgeous in the realms of imagination, they will grow, by God's blessing, as love deepens and intensifies the character, to clear perception of realities that lie beneath the surface of the work-day world. Cast for parts in life's great spectacle different from those that fall to the lot of Charles and Marian, yet when the last, eventful act shall close the drama and the day, the Master of the spectacle will say, "Well done, good and faithful." Pausing above the hilltops, pale Vesper waits to chronicle upon her silver disk their pure betrothal; and now they part, and now Orion rules the scene.

Scarcely had the echoes of the pattering horse-hoofs of this gay young rider died away, and the fair head of that gentle, loving Mary sank into its pillow, hovered over by blissful dreams, when, emerging from the shadows, a group of five, whose stealthy movement betrays guilt and fear, pause before the great gate. The lights in the gamekeeper's lodge are now extinguished, but a gipsy lad, on tip toe, finds his way into the open air and unbars the postern. By midnight the burglars again pass into the shadows and disappear. Well does the gipsy lad, arrested as a poacher five years after, know who wore Peter Styles' shoes.

We return now to the scene with which the preceding

chapter opened, briefly summing up events at home since dark John Chivers crossed the seas with the stolen child. Village gossip, rural incidents, courtships and marriages, and episodes in the history of glad or aching hearts, shall not detain us long.

Hugh Brompton, the younger, since he parted with Mary Bloomfield, on that winter evening, is bronzed with foreign travel. He has stood upon the pyramids, beheld the cataracts of the Nile, crossed the desert, and visited the Holy cities, moving everywhere with the modern Englishman's keen, practical eye. But, while Cupid with airy circles showers sunlight, coy Hymen will not yet draw near to light the marriage flame. His Mary, with many a blush, has whispered that their marriage must be deferred till father and Charlie are reconciled. The duties of the household now devolve upon the daughter, for the tender mother is drooping, while the shadow deepens in the old Squire's eyes, and a darker shadow still throws a reflection of its coming gloom upon the hearthstone, the shadow of death in the house. Hidden in the heart this gentle one has a secret which none divine. Her persuasions drew Marian Deschamps from the charge of her little foundling to pay that last visit to Wingate. Perchance, had it not been for this innocent error, Charlie might ere this have won his bride. A twelvemonth from the coming Christmas, and seven years will have passed since then. Nearly of the same age with Marian, her three-and-twenty summers ripen to glorious, womanly bloom, and, like some prophet bird, with shining plumage and unearthly tongue, Hope sings in her bosom that all will yet be well.

The gipsy mother, successful in her errand, on arriving at the Priory made known to the young Squire the misfortune with which her son was overtaken. With sound, sterling good sense, calling for his horse at once, Mr. Brompton, before the hour appointed, held an interview with the

poacher. Aware of the labyrinths in a rogue's mind, while yet the terrors of imprisonment were impending, he extracted from the lad a full confession of the particulars of the robbery at Wingate. Three of the gang were professional burglars from London, and the fourth the valet of Dr. Bushwig, known to his associates by the alias of Jack Tof-ton. Of the stolen plate a considerable portion was sold to Hezekiah Pinch, the usurer at Sloppery. The declaration exonerated Peter Styles from all the suspicions of guilt under which the good man had left the land, the depraved youth admitting that he had gone that night to the lodge for the purpose of opening the postern after the gatekeeper was asleep, and that he had stolen the shoes and worn them with wool stuffed around the feet.

The confession was complete. The young Squire insisted that it should be repeated before witnesses, after which he paid the fine, and the poacher was set at large, two days being given to him before the declaration should be made public, in order to effect his escape.

Never does a lover find his mistress more beautiful than when engaged in the sweet pursuit that was Mother Eve's before the fall,—gathering the garden fruits or ministering to the wants of the blooming family of flowers. On the ensuing morning, armed with the confession of the gipsy, young Brompton found his way to Wingate Hall, discovering his charmer superintending the removal of delicate plants to their Winter quarters. The old Squire sat, enjoying the October sun and gazing on the merry group, making the garden ring with laughter, and, when the son-in-law elect, now installed as a prime favorite, approached to request a favor, the smiling, good-humored answer was at once in the affirmative.

"I am on my way," observed young Hugh, while blooming Mary stood wondering at his side, "I am on my way to Richmanstown, where I hope ere four hours have passed

to see Peter Styles' wife and tell her that we have now ample proofs that her good man was innocent. My request is that you will accompany me."

Squire Bloomfield forgot his pipe, which dropped into a score of fragments, listened till the narration was at an end, and then ordered the carriage. An angel had troubled the waters within his breast. Furiously had he stormed to discover that his own son had given bail for the appearance of the suspected man at the Assizes, and more furiously still at the intimation that by this son's advice the gatekeeper had fled the country till evidences in his favor should be brought to light. Against poor Marian, too, his anger had been fierce on learning that, as if to put him to the blush before the county, her generous heart had opened with a shelter for the afflicted woman and child. Now Conscience rose from sleep, and, sudden with remorse as with anger, he announced a determination to bear the tidings and make amends before he slept.

It is time for thee to rouse, old man,—time for thee to set thine house in order, ere the lights are darkened at the windows. Thou art going on a long journey ere many days. Thou shalt be escorted by him who rides upon the pale horse. Anger and rash judgment are dangerous companions on that shadowed road.

In some families the transition to the coming life is marked by perceptible changes, and a long twilight precedes the darkness; in others, the sun drops almost instantaneously below the horizon; at once the day's bright glory is for ever fled. Thus had the father of Squire Bloomfield ceased to live. One day beheld him at the dinner table, and the next upon a bier. The strong man, as he contemplated the rosy complexion and smiled upon the rounded limbs, would not allow himself to believe for a moment that any symptoms of apoplexy were indicated. Dr. Bumblefuz had been consulted nevertheless. The professional

gentleman pooh-poohed at the idea of apoplexy; "good old port never harmed when taken in moderation. Sixty years was a pretty time of life, with his constitution, to fear a disease of the heart! A man was in his prime at sixty. He was no more apoplectic than an oak tree!" Yet the old tenants, who remembered the father and his unlooked-for death, shook their heads; and the fond wife had learned to tremble at every noise, and start even at the sound of carriage wheels. More quiet, too, and yet more affectionate in tone and manner, were those fair daughters; as if the brave old oak, wearing still the fullness of its honors, was trembling to a fall.

At three P.M., a ring at the gate of the Deschamps' mansion announced visitors, Squire Bloomfield, Miss Bloomfield, Mr. Hugh Brompton. Marian met the party, holding her heart quiet, as if they had never separated in sadness or bitterness, and welcomed the Squire as a daughter meets a father, whose weaknesses, for love's sake, she must not see.

The "Lady Superior of the Sloppery Convent," as gossips had christened the radiant girl, did not betray, in sunny smile, or dimpled cheek, or merry laugh, that penance or conventual seclusion had made her less worthy of Hymen's blessing or Cupid's bow. Love seemed to have ripened in her abundant graces, and when, after a few hurried words, apologising for a brief absence, she re-entered, leading little Moll by the hand, while trembling, sobbing Mrs. Styles moved by her side as one who walks in a vision, the Squire did homage in his soul.

When afterward, Hugh and Mary, leaving Charlie's father in her charge, rode away in the carriage to execute some commissions in the High Street, the old gentleman more wearied than he liked to confess, reclined in a cushioned chair, served with refreshment by those delicate hands, he vowed a vow that Charlie should have the girl if *he had to court her himself by proxy*. At last more than

a score of cheerful, girlish voices, accompanied with the pattering of little feet, bounding down the stairs, announced that the school-room was deserted for the play ground. Throwing open the casement and wheeling the great chair round to face it, the motherly maiden attracted his attention to the happy group, called them her children, and narrated, as sunny faces passed along the gravel walk, of the filth, the squalor, the disease, and sin, and wretchedness, from which, one by one, they had been rescued; and then, as the heart was moved to its deepest fountains, and the Squire averted his face to conceal sudden tears, she led him to the other window, opening upon the Green, now bearing on its emerald the golden russet of the falling October leaves, and pointed out the spot where Charity Green had well nigh perished in the snow drifts on that Christmas night more than five years ago.

Returning homeward through the dusk of eventide, the image of Marian still floated before the mind's eye, as when she stood amidst the beauty of the sunset, crowned with a radiance of faith and self-sacrifice, more glorious to her blushing womanhood than coronet or crown. A new conception of the excellence of female character, devoted to charitable ministrations, from that time enriched the intellect. He could almost forgive his son for kindling at so pure an example and desiring to win a corresponding nobleness; nor was he ashamed to confess, as the dear wife of his youth wept and listened in the seclusion of their own room, that Marian Deschamps would not be a less worthy mate for any man's son in the land because she had trained herself in a generous hospitality to those whom God's providence had sent to be household guests; and not less fitted to rear noble children of her own, because, in beautiful girlhood, she had pitied the orphan, and discharged a mother's duties to those, like the lambs of a dead ewe, left upon the bleak March common of the world.

CHAPTER XIX.

CHARITY GREEN'S EDUCATION.

"Ugh! who made that?" cried Neeshema, pointing to the heavens, fiery with the sunset; "the Great Manitou: me worships Him." Attired now in neat, befitting garments, holding in her hand the Book, all glowing to faith's enkindled eye with a brightness more intense than that which moves in the pathway of the sun, Charity Green was endeavoring to instill into the mind of the aged Indian woman, now sheltered and kindly cared for in a domicile upon the Prout estate, some true ideas of Him who came to fit us for Paradise in this life, and then to gather us, with His children of every age and clime, into the unspeakable blessings of the life beyond.

"Ugh!" cried Neeshema, still gazing at the descending luminary, flaming now above the crimson tree-tops with his last, bright rays; "Ugh! he goes to light the happy hunting-grounds. There is the home of Gitchee Manitou; there, in the lodges, there is no want of venison or succatash."

Like curling smoke that purples from its gray mist as it ascends from some invisible altar, the floating clouds grew radiant in middle heaven. The squaw arose; threw the blanket from her aged person; the dark eye dilated; words of the aboriginal tongue, accents of a language soon to perish from the face of the earth, mingled strangely with the imperfect English of her latter days. "Ugh! it is good. The sachems have gathered round the council fires. They

light the peace-pipe. Gitchee Manitou sits above the mountains, and smiles to see the warriors and the squaws. He smoke the calumet. Look! the red smoke from the peace-pipe of the Great, Good Spirit." Votary of Nature, rude worshiper of the unknown God, gathering around herself for a mantle the traditions of her forefathers, she wraps the dusky soul within them ere it sinks to sleep.

Image of the Nature worship, the Fetish worship, that is soon to pass away, the aged squaw might well be made its symbol. Upon the wrinkled brow and in the seamed countenance, a thousand passions linger like household ghosts above the ashes of the hearthstone. There falls upon her from that crimsoned Western sky no drop that reddened from the Divine affections, as the Man of Sorrows bled upon the cross, to mingle its healing with life's foul tides, and so to cleanse the turbid stream ere it plunges over death's Niagara. Its seamless glory shines on human ruins; its golden lights reveal the foul and creeping things that skulk and hide within the desecrated chambers of the breast.

The youthful teacher confronts the form of dusky age, type of the worship of God in Revelation,—of Christianity, purified from every extrinsic stain that the world's evils have cast against it; with eye that sees through sunset glories to a brighter home; with hand that clasps a simple book that dropped from Heaven, and feels it transformed to a sacred Pharos and deluging with light the boiling oceans of the world.

As we gaze upon the Indian woman, she is evidently changed. The rum bottle, through Charity's gentle influence, is laid aside, yet the system is breaking up.

The Christian, when old age comes, lives in the prospect. The youthful immortal stirs within its tenement of clay, and flesh and blood conceal the features of the unfolding angel. But the devotee of Nature lingers in the retro-

spect,—in visions of a youth whose years have fled,—in communion with dream-voices that long ago dropt away to slumber.

To Charity death is but a mysterious transition, to be with the Holy One, who dwelleth between the cherubim; to bask in the ardors of unshadowed day; to master the dialect of the Divine Intelligence; to expatiate in the delights of an all-diffusive and Infinite Benevolence; to live in the reception and the communication of her Lord's own bosom loves for evermore.

To Neeshema, if definite conceptions come at all, they point but to a renewal of a mere natural existence; to the clear river where light hands shall paddle the birch canoe; to the ground where the maize and the pumpkin shall come forth with little toil; to the forest where the braves shall start the quarry, and come home to the wigwam at nightfall to feast upon its flesh. Even this picture is but a shadow, filled in its fearful foreground with fantastic clouds. Sweeter it is, while life's frail bark whirls down the rapids, to avert the head from the dark waves rushing past the prow,—to sit with wistful gaze rivetted on the dim and misty shades of the receding shore.

The Christian stands elate and radiant, beholding, as earth's shattered pinnace trembles, and leaps forward, and disappears into the dark vortex, thousands upon thousands of gathering forms, all wearing a common likeness to the Crucified, clothed with His glory, triumphing in His victory. The frail spars break beneath the feet, while, soaring above the whirlpool, the mounting Spirit cries aloud, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

If the question, How shall a young man cleanse his ways? when urged home by the keen darts of the Divine Spirit, reveals boiling passions in his young blood that can only be conquered by superhuman power, the problem, How to build up the life-ruin of three score years into cathedral

majesty, to light the crimsoned windows with altar-flames from paradise, to fill each dim, secluded aisle with kneeling companies of purified affections, to bring down Incarnate Deity into the midst of these tenants of the breast while they kneel and call Him Master? — this rested on the youthful disciple with an importunate pressure that would not withdraw its weight.

Soon after finding her kind protector, and while yet the world of books was just unvailing, the child's feet had sought, returning on a Saturday afternoon from the village school, a rural temple where a simple people worshiped God.

In these days, when every form of abominable delusion sweeps over Christendom, and sleek denial clothes itself in stately robes of religious semblance, the child was encountering a fearful hazard,—but God was there. It was a love feast of that primitive communion whose good fruits we have seen evidenced in Peter Style's life.

The genial, smiling person at the door demanded if she was a member. The unsophisticated maiden could not comprehend his meaning, thought that he desired to inquire if she believed in the Great Burden Bearer of human sorrows and drew forth a little volume of the Gospels, the gift of Marian Deschamps, which had never left her in all these perilous years. The young heart thrilled to think that she was going to kneel amidst those who knew the Friend, whose mysterious voice and touch were to her as sensible realities. The interlocutor shook his head, but a venerable man with locks white as snow, a traveling preacher of the fold, saw the tear of disappointment gathering, and his own heart, made soft as that of a little child, melted in an instant, as he spoke, "Never mind the ticket, brother, the witness of God's Holy Spirit is in her breast."

Again, reader, I narrate life as it is. If men sin and put souls in jeopardy for great prizes of world's wealth or world's

honors, I tell it even to the color of the wine. If they grasp after the unseen God, feeling their way, with faith's unerring insight, where perhaps my darkened eyes might fail to discern the pathway, it is mine, as well, to narrate what they tell us the hands touched, the bosom felt, the vision saw. These are real players on this actual stage.

Charity entered while some told of dark and evil lives made pure, of doubts removed by the influence of Jesus. All joined in singing a tender and touching hymn. If the spirit of sect ever defiled that humble gathering place it had no power on this occasion. An old lady whose youthful countenance, beaming with good affections, seemed ill to accord with the gray hair and wrinkled hands, moved, as by some mysterious impulse, narrated an instance in her own experience, where an aged friend, kept in ignorance of the Gospel for many years, had received it as a gift from Heaven when already death was nigh. The child leaped up forgetting the place and exclaimed, "Then Neeshema can find Him too."

Abashed at encountering the sudden gaze of so many eyes and now shrinking into her seat, the shy maiden wept that she had spoken, but, after the brief services were at an end, the aged teacher took the foundling's hand in his own and won the story of her life. Did he wonder and ask in himself the question, "Whence hath this one knowledge since she hath never learned?" Did he disbelieve, as now with enkindled and burning words, herself the teacher rather than the taught, this half untutored wanderer described an experience of communion with the Divine Spirit on lonely sea beaches, in dark, deep woods, and over distant seas? Did the Heaven that lies about us in our infancy gather in them both with encircling folds of light? Did the aged priest, looking now soon to cease his labors with this mortal life, feel the Master's presence more nearly even than in hours of most devout communion hitherto? He

bowed the head and wept, and parted from her with a blessing.

The preceptress of the village school soon divined that in the slender, graceful frame, now poring over books with an eagerness for instruction that seemed insatiable, a spirit lived whose unwritten education had been conducted by an unseen influence. Lydia Merrit, as this meek and patient instructress was called, had fed her own spirit from childhood on Guyon and Fenelon. Originally of the persuasion of the Friends, and learning there to be quiet and to wait on God, accepting alike the outer revelation and the inner light, her's was a nature fitted to understand and rapidly to accelerate the progress of that enthusiastic, hopeful mind.

The effect of books upon some intellects is to load them down, as Saul's weighty armor encumbered the youthful David. To others they come less like dead matter and more like living creatures. There is a spirit in every book, no less than in every valley flower. Man communicates something of his own essence to all his works. The effect of reading on Charity was as the beams of the rising sun when they penetrate the meadow mists and bring into clear relief that which was before mantled in obscurity. Surrounded with congenial associations, memory seemed to waken, finding in veiled crypts and chambers, many a corresponding vision to the wonders described in volumes of travel and adventure, till Europe lay like some unrolling panorama in the back ground of the past.

The picture is mirrored, for one brief moment, on the eyeball, then perhaps we depart from it for ever; yet not a waving tree or gray, old tower but that leaves its exact imprint in the memory. The gipsies, during their wandering life upon the continent, had visited, in succession, the principal European cities. For once the great dramatist was wrong when he wrote that our solid globe, with all its wonders, is to pass "like the airy fabric of a vision, and

leave no wrack behind." Let nature melt like some evanescent bubble upon that golden chalice in which eternity pours out perpetual libations at God's feet! When the mist which glittered in all these burnished images of sky and landscape vanishes in thin vacuity, the imperishable picture survives the canvas that decayed, reproduced in myriads of deathless recollections in the art-galleries of the immortal spirit.

It is a benignant Providence which makes the young soul eager to receive impressions from the visible world. The Divine Spirit teaches through the unwritten page. The child of the king and the beggar are lodged in the same grand palace, "a house not made with hands," suggestive of the coming home, "eternal in the Heavens."

The Alps and the Appenines towered up in this young girl's recollection; the huge dome of St. Peter's arose amidst a wilderness of spires; Italy grew into a living panorama in the maiden's mind; England followed it; America, in nearer view, completed the scene. Her reminiscences of Italy were like dream pictures, which melt into rosy indistinctness on awakening. Those of England were more sharp and definite. The death scene at the ale-house near Richmanstown, the funeral of Sally Chivers on Christmas day, her lonely vigil at the grave in the churchyard of St. Winifred stand out like carvings cut in sharp relief upon the surface of the spirit. Henceforth there is nothing of moment indistinct which has occurred during the waking hours.

As the historical consciousness of Christendom begins with the Divine Spirit manifest in human form, lighting al the past with His luminous presence, and leading on the steps of nations by a constant succession of providences, so, to compare the least things with the greatest, our little wanderer's personal experience, as a soul set into an individuality of her own and independent of others, dates from

the hour when some Inward Voice, cleaving the mind to its center, awoke an echo in the senses, saying, "Follow me."

Never to be forgotten, never to be effaced, the image which the radiant imagination took into itself of that Majestic Stranger, stands sublime upon the topmost peak of worship and in the inmost dwelling place of love. It was said of old, "When thy father and thy mother forsake, the Lord will take thee up," and, reader, it is true. However these obscure senses may refuse to accept, because they cannot grasp, His presence, the Omnipotent is ever with us.

To love Him and to keep His commandments, is the religion of Charity Green. The New Testament is to her a sacred oracle, and in it she reads of who that Stranger was, and how He veiled Himself in flesh and appeared in semblance of a child, and revealed Infinitude through human clay, and made that clay all instinct with manifest Omnipotence, and stilled the tempest, and raised the dead, and blessed the infants that some would fain have kept from the shelter of His arms, and afterward rose to the high Heaven, where He was before, yet promised His Comforting Presence to earth's frail children in their need, on to the end of time.

This faith was all unintelligible jargon to Neeshema, though in her place of idols may have perhaps existed one rude altar to the unknown God.

The red light still lingers. "Ugh!" and now almost with anger, cries the squaw, "Tell me no book God. Me worship tree God, river God, cloud God. God be here. Hark!" and now the melancholy wind of evening stirred the forest trees to some sad requiem. Her voice changed, grew deep, sepulchral and almost fearful. "Hark! He is gathering the braves together in the happy hunting-grounds. He asks, 'Where is Neeshema?' The sachems and the sagamores answer, 'The old squaw is in the wig-

wams of the pale face.' Then the white canoe is launched upon the black waters. The Great Spirit cries, 'I have called her to her people?' Hark!"—and now the wind harps of the forest all thrilled together,—“Neeshema hears. The white canoe comes over the dark waters. Neeshema will paddle in it to the land of souls. Hark! the trees bend their heads at the voice of Gitchee Manitou.”

Nature and Revelation are not so far apart as they seem. Could Nature speak in a language of words, not a spear of meadow grass but would preach the Gospel. The excitement of the squaw subsided; the worn frame sank down, still quivering with emotion. The red light faded into darkness, as the lamp of the Nature-worshiper goes out when death comes to the spirit. The crackling birch upon the hearth gave out a cheerful flame. The pale face maiden lit the evening candle, assisted the aged squaw to her couch, soothed her with tender caresses, and then answered, “Yes, Neeshema, I hear the Great Spirit too. He is never still. When the robins come, and the blue birds, they sing of Him. When the young, green leaves sprout, they say, ‘He makes us grow; it is good.’ He is every where. He glides in His canoe over the bright blue water of the skies; and where He dips the paddle it sparkles into stars. It is He who makes the old birds love their young. He sings all night in the south wind, and the seeds put forth their shoots and come up out of the ground to hear His pleasant voice. Then He changes them all to flowers when He smiles upon them. All things are happy because they feel that He is good, and loves every thing that He has made.”

The squaw lay as in a half dream, the face softened, the eyes swam with coming tears. Neeshema was pleased. Was Charity becoming a convert to her dim faith in the Great Manitou?

The youthful disciple continued, “He talks to the musk-quash in the ponds and tells them that the winter will be

very cold and long, that they may make their houses warm; or that it is to be short and pleasant, that they may have more time to play. He speaks to the squirrels and whispers to them how many nuts they must gather to last during the moons of the snow. When the spring comes the marsh birds hear him saying, "I shall send a rainy summer;" then they build their nests on the tops of the dry tussocks. But if He says, "Much sun, much warmth, little rain;" they hear His voice and build at the very brinks of the streams, for they know that their nests will not be overflowed. The Good Spirit talks in my heart. He says to me, "Love Neeshema; she is old; be a daughter to the squaw."

Oh! ye, who would convert men to a faith in Revelation, trace out the self same Spirit in the two records; show that both are outbirths of the wisdom of the one God. It was now for Charity to open her book, but first she said "Tell me Neeshema, what does the red man say of the Manitou?"

The squaw found words to answer, "There are two Manitous, the Great Good Manitou,—he was first of all,—then came the bad Manitou; but the good, is stronger. At the thunder of His voice and when he draws the bow and shoots the lightnings for His arrow the bad Manitou flies away. He comes to the braves and the squaws; they call Him the Master of Life, the Wacondah. He stands before them as the noblest of the sagamores, for He makes Himself like them to be seen, but when He passes away the red light of his blanket is like the setting sun. Then they know that Gitchee Manitou has been with them and they call it 'good.' Squaws that have loved the papooses and braves who have brought home game to the lodge He loves much. He gathers the good of all the tribes about His knees in the happy hunting grounds."

Then this daughter of the pale face responded. "Even so. This is the book of the Good Manitou. This tells that the Good Manitou is greatest and first of all, and that the Evil

Manitou came afterward to steal the hearts of His children. The Good Manitou makes the corn, but the Bad Manitou teaches men to change it into rum. The Good Manitou makes the ash and the hickory but the Bad Manitou first taught the red man that with arrows they might shoot and kill each other. Once He came down to earth and made Himself a man, as Neeshema says the Wacondah comes to the council fires of the braves in the happy hunting grounds." Then, opening the volume, the heart put all its love upon the lips and trembled, as scene after scene came forth to live before the rude, astonished, darkened mind.

When Charity came to the account of the raising of Lazarus the listener motioned her to stop, and, gasping with emotion, muttered, "Me old, me poor, me drink much rum, swear big curses; Neeshema afraid."

The maiden continued, till the cross, with all its preternatural imagery, seemed rising into view. The dark eyes dilated, and the savage almost screamed, "Why He no kill? why Him no make the braves fight in the clouds? why Him not say, 'Good dead men come up out of the graves and fight for me?' why Him no look, and kill them all?"

"Because,"—deep, solemn, plaintive, came the answer—"because He says, 'Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you;'—because God is love."

God is love! Oh, had Christendom drank in the meaning of this pregnant sentence, ere now earth would have been a paradise! The squaw took the book and held it to her ear, looked at the letters, and turned at last to the vignette representing the resurrection. One, in radiant apparel, was coming from the grave, while the rock was rolled away, and an angel sat upon it. The sun had gone down in red clouds, the gusty wind foreboding all the while a tempest. Now it came. The night grew fearful, and the rain dashed against the windows, as before long, reader,

the cold and swelling waves of the sea that we must venture over will dash the salt drops from their foamy mountains as we draw near the shore.

"See!" cried Neeshema, pointing to the vignette, "what mean this?" Truly, what does it mean? We know that Heaven's Lord, leaving His material shrine within the tomb, went into the place of the departed. We know that victorious, effulgent, no more to suffer, but to reign for evermore, He came forth again.

The response was breathed; the awed soul trembling to listen,—“That we, dying as He died, going into the place of departed spirits as He went, shall afterward appear with shining bodies like that in which He passed away to Heaven.”

The immortality of the soul is a faith broadcast over the world, and inculcated no less in the Holy Oracles. That man, a Spirit, incarnated for a time in flesh and blood, shall be excarnated at the dying hour, and depart to be with the good or the bad, as his affections were good or evil, seems a doctrine wrought into the very fibrils of mankind. But that man, after being excarnated from flesh and blood shall, at some sublime close of earth's majestic tragedy, reinvest himself in a most fitting and visible body, at once enabled to operate, by an actual presence, in the realms of matter, and to dwell, by the quality of its substance, with the Infinite Spirit,—this must remain a mystery. But Jesus rose; and, from it, Charity preached the resurrection.

"Listen, Neeshema. Soon men will ask where is the squaw, and the spring beauty will answer, I grow above her body. Where will Neeshema be? If Neeshema is good, in the house of the Master of Life. If Neeshema is bad, in the lodge of the Evil Manitou. The seed of corn is a little grain when it is put in the ground, but rises afterward like a warrior, with green blanket and waving plumes.

The spirit of the maize comes to live within it and holds out roasting ears in the season. So, out of Neeshema's body, which is in the ground, will come forth, if she is good, a body, shining like the daughter of the Wacondah, and in it Neeshema herself will stand, and hear them say, if He is pleased with her, "Neeshema is mine."

"Made like Him, like Him we rise;—
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies."

There is a belief of the understanding which makes the mind clear and critical, able to argue, to criticise and define. There is another belief of the heart, which vents itself at last in almost agonised supplication to grow into the very image of the truth and virtue that it loves. Neeshema believed from this hour that the Manitou, whom her fathers had worshiped through His vail of field and flood, of eventide and morning, was indeed the One who came in a man's likeness to the people of a far land, teaching their braves to be just and merciful, and their squaws to be tender and affectionate, embracing even the papooses and blessing them as His own.

From a fond and dreamy faith in the traditions of her forefathers,—from a vague hope that possibly a mere natural existence might be resumed in some happy hunting-ground beyond the sunset, the squaw began to avert the soul's eyes. But now came that one great difficulty which prevents all the world at once from owning the Gospel.

Naturalism, whether it lives in rude tradition or talks from printed pages, is an opiate that soothes. It comes to man with a honied draught, mingled with the choicest dews of hope, and puts it to the lips. He quaffs it and, lo! the very vices that have engendered and reared their hideous brood within his breast appear as virtues in disguise; and judgment to come is all a myth of some mad dreamer in *the past*; and sin the pleasant necessity of human nature's

first condition; the good and bad differ but in the stages of their growth; eternity, if it be that man shall live again, sees all pursuing the endless round that had in matter its beginning,—the human family ripening from an animal to a spiritual existence.

The draught which the Nature worshiper so greedily drains is sweet at first, but madness follows it. The cup which the Genius of Christianity presents is bitter to the taste. The one tells us that we can grow out of our evils with no thought for the morrow; the other that, unless in supernatural strength we conquer them, they drag us downward to perdition.

Neeshema listened and believed; and now the cry arose, "Me bad squaw; me curse; steal; rage; drink rum; no good in me." To rich and poor, to high and low comes the same invitation, believe and live. Neeshema believed with the heart; yearned and wrestled for some divine, sustaining power, to nerve the soul to combat against its enemies. The heart broke at last and melted in contrition for every sin, where every heart should break and melt, at His feet who reconciles the world unto Himself. The humble roof echoed that night and morning with fervent prayers; and now it seemed that Love, unutterable Love, came to dwell and make its everlasting home within that dusky breast. The clouded mind brightened and silvered in that marvellous glory, as does the crescent moon before she drops away in the tender gloaming and is lost from sight. In this manner, helping on the steps of the squaw, and clinging still, with undoubting faith, to the hand of the invisible Comforter, the maiden saw the autumn vanish and the winter pass away.

When the flowers began to bloom again it was evident that Neeshema must die. Her steps were few and feeble; she complained of broken rest; food ceased to nourish; the limbs became emaciated; the language of her youth, not without a plaintive sadness in its intonations, was

continually upon her lips. Unable to read the New Testament, she sat with it for hours clasped against the heart, and said that she felt it talking to her. Sometimes, weeping bitterly, the squaw murmured that her old heart was very bad and would not yield. At times, with supernal joy kindling through tears, elate in the consciousness of the soul's hope in its Divine Redeemer, she whispered that the new heart, which was in the old one, grew stronger. "Me old squaw, me new squaw, one inside the other. Old squaw ugly, think bad thoughts; new squaw want to be good,—much kind,—much gentle,—much love."

As the spring began to open, Charity found a new book. Dreamer of Bedford Jail, simple hearted as any woman, brave as any Greatheart in Cromwell's iron troop, thou, too, didst find this Shining One, who is not far from any of us.

The allegory of a Christian's life became more than parable to these pilgrims. Christian and Faithful lived again, and fought their battles over. Mercy, Christiana, and all that gentle throng, grew real. The House Beautiful opened its doors; the Delectable Mountains reared their empurpled heights; the glass of faith revealed the City that hath foundations beyond the dark river. Here they waited till the King's Messenger came, bearing a token that his missive was true, even this, "At eventide there shall be light." And so the squaw, still holding the hand of that tender, gentle one, still talking of the land that she was going to, the shining land,—stood at last upon the flood's very brink, waiting for the Strong Man to bear her through the waters. About midnight the voice of Neeshema was heard awakening Charity from sleep. To this she was accustomed, but rose at once, trimmed the lamp and replenished the wasted, smouldering fire. The squaw had half risen in her bed; the eyes, unearthly in their radiance, the voice, deep and solemn, told plainly that her time had come.

There had been a gentle rain, and the soft drops fell lightly upon the roof like the footsteps of the angels.—Through the partially opened window floated the perfume of the woods, the odor of beeches and maples, the moist and delicate fragrance of budding leaves. Neeshema called the orphan to her bedside. The new squaw had triumphed; the old squaw was underneath her feet forever.

And now the tones grew clearer as she said: "Bury me in the Christian grave-yard, for I am going to the white man's God." Then her eyes grew luminous with a great glory that shone through them. She smiled as if beholding a wonder which these poor senses cannot fully know; then clasped the wasted hands upon the heart, and cried, "Me have Him here! me have Him here!" The utterance died away in whispers soft and musical, as when an infant sees the father bending over its pillow, and hushes every accent against the throbbings of his breast. Then, with a murmured blessing upon the orphan girl, who had been more than daughter, more than friend, while the hands lay lightly on the bosom, and the features relaxed into a look of settled peace, she slept. Oh! where, amidst what unimagined glories, was the waking? "At eventide there shall be light."

CHAPTER XX.

THIEVES' PARADISE.

In the roadstead and harbor of San Francisco lay a great fleet, of which nearly every vessel was deserted by its crew. Some were sheer hulks, dismantled, with standing and running rigging all gone; some fresh from a voyage, with sails flapping idly against the spars. Here lay vessels anchored in deep water, and near them others bilged or aground upon the bars. At this time it was almost impossible to ship a hand before the mast in any of the ports of the Pacific; all were eager for the mines.

The vessel before us, far out in the bay, is the good ship *Walrus*, of New Bedford. All that is left is a stout hulk without a stick standing, fast, where she went aground. One of the first to enter the Golden Gate after the discovery at Sutter's Fort, deserted immediately by her crew, she now serves purposes of which her owners had no inkling when she left an Eastern harbor for a voyage round the Horn. An old-school vessel, square built, deep in the waist, roomy and firm, and well put together, she has weathered many a storm in which more ambitious craft foundered. Her cargo has been discharged, the hulk disposed of by the supercargo, the deadlights boarded in, while men are seen, plying, night and morning, to and from the shore. Dwellings are all too few on terra firma for the shifting, crowding population, and the *Walrus* bears the name of a sailor's boarding house, reputed to be occupied by stevedores and longshoremen.

The era of policemen and vigilance committees is still in the future; therefore, though the old ship is far from being in good repute, the doings between decks pass unquestioned. A gruff bull-dog, of a savage breed, keeps watch on deck against stragglers and water-rats, who infest the shipping and skulk stealthily from vessel to vessel, securing such plunder as may conveniently be taken away.

A dingy caboose still serves the purpose of a cook-house. In it we may discover a stout colored wench, who answers to the name of Phillis. Rings of costly price glitter on the ebon fingers, and laces, woven in the looms of Honiton or Brussels to grace the snowy necks of court beauties or the daughters of merchant kings, are displayed, with many a stain, upon her ample person. Perhaps we may hear, as she pursues her labors, such mutterings as, "Dese ere poor trash takes big airs upon themselves, and is mighty consequential." Phillis was brought up in an old family on the Eastern shore of Maryland, and has a keen eye to discriminate between manners acquired in the drawing-room, and those picked up in country taverns, or gradually formed in drinking bouts upon the shore, or in wild life on the high seas.

Tumbling up the companion-way, still but in part awake, as if not entirely recovered from the fumes of a debauch over night, an acquaintance, whom we last saw baffled in a deed of blood upon the banks of Feather River, makes his appearance. The look, half ruffian, half gentleman, which we may still discern, affords a clue, notwithstanding a change of toilet, to the part which he still plays in the world's drama.

The old ship has become a nest of hornets, who, accumulating no honey by their own honest industry, take delight in waylaying and plundering the working bees. Making his way to the sea board, in company with Handy Ben and Cunning Joe, the three arrived at the conclusion that gold

was to be obtained by easier methods than excavations in dry ravines. Here they luxuriate on the spoils of many a dark deed, and are the presiding spirits of the ruffians who make the craft their den.

The employment pursued by Chivers is that of a gentleman gambler, an adept in the mysteries of Monte, Faro and Roulette. The rough attire of the miner is now discarded for clothing of the most fashionable style. He sports a massive diamond as a shirt pin, a repeater ticks in the fob, while diamonds glisten on the fingers. For drink, the costly vintages of the old world afford him their choicest ; so he lives, faring sumptuously every day.

We may now behold the ruffian of many crimes at a late breakfast in the cabin. The flash man is accompanied by his fancy woman, here styled Mrs. Chivers, but who bore another name at Botany Bay. Their acquaintance dates from other scenes and former days. When gay Robert Devereux was a wild youth about town, this girl, Lucy Talbot, was in her prime. The dark, oriental eyes glowed in full lustre, while the voluptuous person, decked in costliest satin, served as a decoy that lured more than one titled son of a great house to ruin. Then she kept her carriage, with footman and coachman, assumed the air of a countess, and squandered thousands on the whims and fancies of her leisure hours. A soft peach bloom was then upon the cheeks, and, possessed of exquisite manner, she charmed her victims by a voice more soft and musical than any flute. This was in the beginning, but that career darkened, till, as the mistress of a forger, the fate of an accomplice closed in disgrace her London life. Still the seductive outline, the full, pouting lip, and the dark, magnetic eyes, remain, but seven years of deeds, that the world glosses over with the polite name of dissipation, have burned their history into the very soul. The voice is bold and masculine, with *a something* cat-like in those of its intonations which are

meant to be most sweet. Around the eyes are blue circles, and the countenance reveals a look of half woe, half utter woe, mingled with shameless passion, while pride and hatred curl in the scornful lip, and deceit and cunning betray themselves in lines about the mouth. Rouge has taken the place of nature's roses. When a woman falls, it is to sink faster than a man.

The scene within is not without interest, when sketched with an eye to the picturesque. The ill matched breakfast service is composed,—a piece here and a piece there,—of the grotesque porcelain of the Indies, contrasted with the airy, beautiful patterns of Wedgewood and the sumptuous wares of France. The drapery is costly damask, but blotched with wine stains, as if left in its place from the revelry of the night. Cards lie heaped upon the locker, beside an open cigar box, and, half thrust into the heap, a sharp Spanish knife that indicates murder. There too is a lady's work-box opened and displaying some remnant of partially finished embroidery, and, crumpled underneath, a richly embroidered shawl of Thibet.

The woman, who presides over the festivities of this impure retreat, is arrayed in a sumptuous morning gown and glistens with jewels. Over against the dead lights a huge plate mirror, once set in burnished gold but now grown dingy and tarnished, doubles in appearance the cabin's length and reflects its every object. If we glance beneath the lid of that valuable toy, made to contain the implements of needle work, we shall discover there a French novel, one of the worst of the species, and, in its uncut leaves, a poniard with a jeweled hilt and keen blade of dark steel blue, there now for convenience as a paper cutter, but belonging to one who can use it to cut the thread of life if there is a call. On either side of the cabin are state-rooms. In the one of ampler size, whose open door reveals a cloud of drapery about a double couch, and gay robes of

silk and muslin suspended against the Parisian prints upon the pannels, Sin clothes itself to appear beautiful for Satan's service, and lies down, half intoxicated, to the impure heart's corrupted dreams. Chocolate and coffee, a flask of champagne, sardines and olives and potted meats, a paté made by cunning hands at Strasburg, ill-made bread and ship's biscuit are the principal elements of the morning meal.

To-day, old Roger Benbow and the Whipper-in, after three weary months of detention, first from the illness of one of the party, and then of the other, arrived in San Francisco, securing at once their passage in the Golden Gate steamer for the Isthmus of Panama. Peter Styles, still known by the alias of Phil Bulwinkle is their companion, his ten thousand pounds of treasure converted now into sterling bills of exchange. But one load at present weighs upon the mind of this honest man, and this he believes will be lifted by God's hand in due time. The mining garb of the Forester is now abandoned for the corduroys and a velveteen coat, while the invaluable documents, for which he has risked so much and traveled so far, are safely concealed within a waist-belt around the person. The trio are now returning to the Atlantic seaboard, where it is agreed that Styles shall assist in the search for the lost heiress.

But if the Forester imagines that he is to pass without danger from San Francisco he miscalculates. However guilt may forget to repay kindness with kindness, it always endeavors to return with usury the injuries which it may have received in the conduct of its criminal enterprises. The gang of desperadoes who make their den in the old ship, stimulated by the prospect of the golden spoil taken from the bar of Feather River, and furnished with ample means by which to identify their quarry, keep daily watch, while Chivers waits his hour to reap a sweet revenge, by *reclaiming* the lost documents at the cost of Benbow's life.

It is said that Salvator Rosa was never able to execute his graphic and terrible pictures of mountain fastnesses and bandits at their bloody work, till, taken captive by robbers, he spent months in the Abruzzi. The painter had never need in the future of drawing upon the imagination, faithful memory serving in its place. To the artist of our day, who dare paint human nature as it is, there is no necessity for a sojourn amidst outlaws of the wilderness. Society is his Abruzzi, and walking abroad with clear-seeing eyes, through the tropical jungles of stormy passions, which grow rank and mighty in all the great cities of the civilized world, he beholds unspoken tragedies inscribed on many a face. He need not retire to the closet to drink inspiration from Homer, Shakspeare, or Dante. Legends more sadly sweet than that of Romeo and Juliet, others fateful as Macbeth, and still others preternatural in grandeur as Hamlet, some in their opening scenes, some at their full meridian of action, and not a few rising to a climax of blood, are being witnessed by the invisible beholders, for whom the earth affords a spectacle, with men and women for actors, who grow into the parts which they assume, and wear them oft, when, shuffling off this mortal coil, the soul fulfills an endless destiny.

Our grandchildren will discover that the present age, which seems to many so prosaic, utilitarian and devoid of romantic interest, teems with wonders, hardly considered astonishing till they became a portion of the past. Let us, reader, albeit with no grand art to compare with that of Salvator, no skill of sketching character in a line to rival him of the Globe Theatre, Bankside,—let us portray on airy canvas in the mind, a drama that transpired in the cabin of the Walrus the ensuing night.

In the Thieves Paradise whose wooden walls rose darkly over the water, a play was acted, brief but graphic; its title **The Gipsy's Revenge.**

Act first commences in the luxurious cabin of the hulk. We discover a supper table flashing with cut glass and china, and set out with meats and wines. The time is ten o'clock in the evening and the first to enter on the stage is the woman of voluptuous person and dark, oriental eyes, who passes at present by the name of Mrs. Chivers. The morning wrapper is laid aside for an evening dress. When did woman ever forget the dainty employment of the toilet? The art of personal decoration begins when they leave the cradle and goes on to the moment in which, with hand mirror upon the sick bed, they smooth the tresses and arrange the muslin wrapper for the final struggle. To the good it is innocent; the human form which God has given requires its fitting raiment, no less than the valley flower or the merry bird. To the bad it becomes a fascination. The lady is alone as yet and her unspoken thoughts may serve as prologue to the drama.

"My memory plays antics. I must still the crazy fiend within me. What have I to do with memory? As I slept,—I had taken no opium and yet I slept,—I dreamed, and yet I knew it was not a dream,—or thought I knew it. A dark man threw a lurid mantle from his shape, stood in plain sight for a moment and then hissed in mine ear, 'Thou shalt be mine to-morrow, not by fire, not by knife, and not by water, but by all the three.' Knife, fire, water! Nay, our paramours, who go, in lusty manhood, ripe in sin, down to the dead, rise never up to prophecy our coming!—Knife,—fire,—water;—'twas an idle dream."

The prologue spoken by the fancy woman ends with the entrance of the fancy man, cast for a part in this play requiring not study so much as genius to embody the spirit in a fearful deed. We have seen him, when, with the cry "Blood for gold," he startled the echoes of Feather River. Then the fiend within his breast asserted its fell supremacy and has *full sway* to night. We need not read the mind to find the

unspoken thoughts. The eyes glare like those of a hyena and the heavy lines at each side the under lip cause it to drop, resembling that of a blood hound, as the husky voice mutters to the mistress; "We have the devil at last. He kept quiet all day, with the milk sop Bulwinkle at his side, as though suspecting danger. We remained on the watch till dusk, when, oudgel in hand, with the skulking fellow who burned the tent following, he sauntered up and down the street for exercise, stepped into the Brilliant, and called for a glass of ale. Stephens engaged him in conversation long enough for Cunning Joe to hocus the drink. He took the ale and was ours. We then coaxed him into the Monte room to see the playing and to give the drug time to work. He imagines us to be a party of jolly Englishmen and is coming to a supper and a song. He is sufficiently drugged to be rash and talkative. In company is the follower, who evidently has taken alarm, seeking to coax the old fox home. Benbow is too far gone to notice him.—Hallo! what man have you here?"

The gaily dressed lady answers, "You and me. No body else."

The gipsy replies, "There is a third. I saw a dark fellow just now, with eyes like the coals. There he stands against the state room door, and shakes his finger at you. He's gone. Have I been hoccussed. I must be dreaming. 'Fire, knife and flood.' Did you speak? I heard a voice mutter 'Fire, knife and flood.'"—Let this close act first.

There is now a sound of men clambering up the ship's sides, and then the tramp of heavy feet upon the deck, while a gruff, jolly voice sings, as the others applaud,

Fire on the gun deck; the cannon balls rattle,
Robin the pirate, is foremost in battle;
Out from the wave gleams a white face before him;
Shot from the yard arm, the billows close o'er him.

Listen again, while lusty voices join in the chorus, amidst laughter and wicked jests;

Fill up your tankards to Robin the Rover :
Home with the ghost, now his life-yarn is over.

Let us shrink away, reader, and keep invisible. Here they come, rough, careless looking men; one or two of their number in gentlemanly attire, some aping a half drunken merriment. Cold eyes are gleaming under those shaggy brows, and beneath coat and jacket lurks the cold steel. Yes, Roger! You unearthed the fox, but the fox has turned and earthed you. Be wary, man, if you value life. This is the outlaw's den.

The air of comfort and luxury, the savory flavor of rich viands, the odor of spirits and wine do not deceive the Forester. The brilliant light, flashing in the face of the leader of the band, discloses to him, however well disguised, the countenance of the gipsy, now wearing a look of mingled hate and triumph. Already the effect of the potion on the stout, well seasoned frame begins to abate, and, if it concentrates itself within the brain, serves there as a temporary stimulant, sufficient to assist the body to struggles almost superhuman. Faithful to the last, the whipper-in is at his side.

The lady, whose sleek, well-trained voice betrays no suspicion of bloody deeds, blandly observes, "You are late, gentlemen. Supper is waiting." As some of the party hustle past the Forester, he feels within the velveteen coat, to find that the arms which he always carries are stolen. A bolt is shot; the cabin doors close behind, and now all are fastened in. The mind acts in hours like these with an intensity, as if the powers were concentrated a hundred or a thousand fold. In that instant the Forester revolved the chances of escape, but only to see that every avenue **was closed against them.** Their two lives now quivered

on the turning of a hair. Bitterly the old man cursed his fate, but resolved, if die he must, to fall fighting. One concealed weapon slept within his waistcoat; what it was we shall see.

No time was allowed for meditation. Two athletic men grasped the arms from behind, while a third drew over the face and eyes a heavy cap. The whipper-in was bound without a struggle; but they had miscalculated the strength of muscle in the Forester, and presumed too much upon the effects of the potion. Hurling away the ruffians, one on either side, tearing the cap from his eyes, and backing at the same instant against the panels, the old man shouted a cry for rescue, mystical, enigmatical, not here to be repeated; a cry that hundreds of thousands of the noblest and the best of men are always ready to respond to at the peril of life. Pirates have respected that cry when uttered by their victims on the high seas; dying men have gasped it and found deliverance when sinking beneath the ocean; prostrate combatants have been saved by it when trampled beneath the hoofs of cavalry on the battle field;—Roger was a freemason.

It met with no response but a pistol shot. The Forester's eyes glared as if they were those of a tiger, but he was cool even in that moment of desperation. The bullet, designed for his head, whizzed by, but carried a death-warrant to the faithful follower, who sank, gory and gasping, at his feet.

As the smoke, growing less dense, revealed the expected victim still erect, a second ball from the revolver buried itself in the panel work, slightly grazing the temple as it passed, while, at the same instant, a nervous, wiry arm plunged a stiletto. The thin blade turned at the rib and snapped. "On, men, on!" shouted the gipsy chief, and now his aim was sure; but, tearing open the shirt, grasping a solitary weapon, the faithful revolver, Benbow was armed

as well. Twelve to one and no quarter! Amidst that whirling smoke, those glaring eyes, those rapid curses, the Forester sank down.

"The wrath of man," said an ancient, "shall praise God, and the remainder He will restrain." Young Washington, on Braddock's field, bore a charmed life, while bullets pattered round like hailstones. There is One who guides the flight of pistol balls, no less than the vast movements of the whirling orbs of space. He walks amidst the atoms no less than above the immensities. There is a "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther," that hedges up the steps of crime, turn where it may. Even desperate men, in moments of despair, are made the agents of retribution. From man's anger there is a way of escape, but, when God drops the bolt of justice, it falls at the instant and in the very spot marked out by infinite decision.

The sudden fall of the Forester was a feint; in the next instant the cabin kindled with light, the state-rooms were in a blaze. The old man, retaining presence of mind to observe a loose lamp burning in a sconce within arm's length, had snatched at it in his fall, and thrown it, with a rapid motion of the hand, into a heap of airy wearing apparel in the adjoining room. Filled as it was with combustible materials, the flames burst out almost instantaneously, leaping, as with the fiery tongues of serpents, from the gay couch of the harlot and spreading like fire in a harvest field.

In the turmoil which followed the loud voice of Chivers was heard above the rest: "Kill him first, then burst the companion way!" As the ruffians surged toward him in a solid mass, the Forester waited till he met the very glare of the gipsy's eyeballs, foremost among the desperadoes. The two fired together. With a convulsive bound, the ruffian sprang into the air, the eyes set in their sockets, the jaws dropping, the tongue lolling from the mouth, the arms extended,—and then fell forward, dead, on the cabin floor.

Amidst screams of revenge, and wild and billowy flame-eddies, and crackling of panel-work, and bursting open of doors, knife after knife riddled the prostrate body of the Forester; yet as the maddened gang, burned, panting for air, almost stifled by the smoke, rushed forth, the victim shouted that loud rescue-cry again. It rose, mingled now with dense and pitchy smoke, streaming through the hatchway, while the murderers, abandoning their dead leader to his fate, gasped for a moment in the cool air, pursued by the flames, roaring now, and shooting out their mighty tongues, leaving their enemy to perish in the burning cabin. None would have ventured again into its furnace of red heat for all the gold in California. Here may end the second act.

We have lost sight of the enchantress, whose gay presence cast a final hue of festivity upon the terrific scene. Discovering that, instead of a murder in cold blood, there was to be a fight, she sought safety, at the first shot, in the state-room nearest at hand, closing the door for protection, and listening behind. She had fastened herself within a sarcophagus of fire. As the flames roared through the cabin, bursting in the thin partitions and feeding upon the heaps of clothing and the dry and resinous pine, the wanton discovered herself to be barred in. The spring bolt, shot in the confusion, refused to open; there was no key.

Rallying upon the deck and now determined to make one effort for the valuables contained within the vessel, the ruffians, with Cunning Joe at their head, were drawing water and dashing it from buckets down the hatchway, where, feebly drawing himself to the foot of the stairs, Roger Benbow, weltering in blood, was still alive. For a few moments it seemed as if the conflagration might be arrested. But now, with terrific cries of agony and despair, having burst through the partially burned wood work, with costly robes flying in a wild blaze and glossy and perfumed tresses leap-

ing into spirals of fire; bounding as if she were some wild beast from its blazing den, the woman dashed into the midst of the excited band. Pausing from their work they shrank away fearfully from the desperation of the eyes and the flaming whirlwind which enwrap the harlot's maddened frame. A moment more, and, with shriek after shriek, crying for "water! water!" with one plunge from the gangway, she sank like a stone beneath the flood tide.

Still clinging to the steps, bleeding from a score of flesh wounds, yet revived briefly by the force and coldness of the water, the Forester lifted his gray head, with painful effort, to the level of the deck.

The fire below, divided into two bodies by the resistance of the solid oak of the stairs of the companion-way, and rushing past, through open passages, had made its road into the hold, which, filled with plunder of many kinds, bales of prints and muslins, hampers and barrels of wines and pipes of spirits, became a raging, belching volcano beneath the feet. The infuriated ruffians raised the cry "Each man for himself," and now crowded into the long boat, in which they were accustomed to pass from the ship to the shore, leaving the hulk to her fate.

The hold now roared like some mighty furnace, and still nearly insensible, and wholly incapable of motion, the Forester lay upon the deck. While from the side of the vessel toward the wharves, fast as fear could urge their flight, the disappointed band of plunderers were making their escape, a stout barge impelled by four pair of brawny arms, drew near, coming up from the bay, where vessels were at anchor.

"Give way, men, give way," shouts a bronzed, bearded figure in the stern sheets. They give way with a will. The flames by this time have found a vent, and are streaming up through the forecastle. The crackling, burning oak, *the flaky pine*, fall round them in glowing cinders, that his

as they touch the waters. The ship quivers from keel to keelson, as cask after cask of spirits in the hold ignites and explodes.

Once more, making a last effort, and this time with the blood gushing over his lips, Roger Benbow gives his cry. Two men, the one foremost whom we saw in the stern sheets of the barge, their hair and garments singed by the heat, and their shoes now hot with the melted pitch that oozes from the caulking, respond to that hail. The Forester is at his last extremity, but finds words to respond to the shout, "Where are you, brother?" No time is afforded for words, since, at any instant, the deck, charred and burning underneath, may break through and precipitate them into the seething mass below. The wounded man is lifted: another instant and he is in the barge, and now the rowers, blistered with the heat, give way again.

The Forester awoke in the morning to find himself on an English brig in the harbor. Arriving toward evening, and anchored in the bay, the only vessel within hailing distance, her master heard, or thought he heard, from the dismantled hulk, a cry for rescue from a brother of the mystic tie, and hastened at once to the scene of action, with what results we have already seen. Benbow, though fatally wounded, still retained reason and speech. Peter Styles being sent for, on the instant, the dying man made over the precious papers containing the secret of Charity Green, with an hastily-written but amply-witnessed affidavit of the method by which they had passed into his possession, narrating, also, the plot whose consequences were so fearful to the abductor of the child. Then, after giving advice to his friend by which to be guided in returning to the old land, the strength which till now had supported him failed altogether. He babbled of green fields, and was a boy once more, angling for trout in mountain brooks, climbing for birds' nests in the copses, or stripping the hazels of their

milky clusters. He talked of seeing young children about the bedside; then the failing voice grew infantile and low, and, repeating a little prayer, learned in childhood at a mother's knee, he dropped away.

Saved from the perils of the deep, and eager for the pleasures of the shore, the witnesses who beheld the old man's spirit take its flight, stood awed in His presence who loosens the silver chord and breaks the golden bow. At last two brothers,—one by a tie that links a select communion of all nations with mysterious symbols to kindly service of each other against poverty and persecution from human foes,—the other bound by that more sacred and immortal bond which unites the followers of the Crucified to all for whom He died,—closed the eyes and performed the last offices which this poor dust demands. Then one repeated the solemn sentence, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live;" and the other responded, "So mote it be, Amen."

CHAPTER XXI.

CHARLES BLOOMFIELD.

It is a wise saying that "The proper study of mankind is man," but, if one would understand human nature, he must possess not only a sensitive body and an active intellect but a soul made receptive of the Divine Essence, and so quickened in all its finest instincts and noblest elements. Those who would behold the real condition of their fellows must not walk, like the cynic Diogenes, lamp in hand at noon-tide, affecting to be in search of the honesty in whose existence he disbelieves. They must be led by a clear beam of that Supreme Reason which illuminates every man that cometh into the world, kindling the bright meridian and the starless midnight with an equal ray. Those find truth who seek it for the good use which it can be put to; those keep it who apply its principles to making human beings better, wiser and happier; those add to it who yield themselves to self-forgetful labors; and those possess it, increasing to eternity, who give God the glory.

Charles Bloomfield was one of those rare minds gifted in an eminent degree with the faculty of insight. Study with him was a species of divination, using the word not in a heathen but a Christian sense. In books he caught the meaning of the author where others lost themselves on the mere surface of the thought. In an age where all read few discriminate; but soon it became his constant habit to weigh all writings and opinions as they were true or false to the deepest, highest nature. Inheriting a balanced, composite

organization, and fixed by principle in central truths, he was neither misled by the reaction which drives earnest yet narrow minds to the old monastic and ascetic pietism, or by the opposite and more dangerous movement, which produces the revolutionary Iconoclast.

The young man had lived, unconscious of these powerful and rare endowments, dwelling much in contact with nature and its most beautiful forms, in the society of good books and lovely and true-hearted women. Singularly free from the pride of opinion, humble and teachable as a child, yet gifted with indomitable will, he was one whom a profound reader of character might have selected as born to become an interpreter of the truths that pertain to man in his highest duties, interests and relations, whether taking root here or bearing their eternal clusters in the hereafter.

Charles Bloomfield was an Englishman, of the stamp so common in the time when they fought more bravely, thought more clearly and prayed more fervently than at any other,—combining the three in one,—the age of Elizabeth. His true place was amidst that golden cycle which numbered Cudworth, Herbert, Hooker and Henry More amidst its distinguished luminaries. So, when dedicated to the priestly office, he cherished a conception of its nature, which, though perhaps crude and vague, was yet large, lofty and genial.

Acting under the advice of Dr. Hartwell, who perceived that this sterling nature required hardening and tempering by stern contact with the world as it is, on entering into holy orders he obtained the curacy of a parish in the outskirts of a great manufacturing town, whose duties were chiefly among poor artisans employed in the mills. The effect of this discipline may be inferred by an extract from a letter to that valued friend after a year's experience in this ministry.

“I grew up, at Wingate Hall, thinking earth to be almost

a Paradise; but now, when faintness comes upon me, it seems next to hell. The greed of gold is eating out the hearts of men. The price of labor is kept as near as possible to starvation point. Employment at a premature age, heated rooms and evil conversation, stimulate an unhealthy, hot-bed growth of passion. Little is known and less cared about sanitary laws. We spin the lives of coming generations into prints and woollens; and a few huge fortunes rise at the expense of the moral and physical degradation of the operatives.

"Laboring men are looked upon as machines, and soon acquire, even if they do not inherit, a passion for drink, which becomes insatiable with indulgence. Depend upon it, there is somewhere in our system a fundamental wrong. Benevolent men, interested in the mills, shake their heads, and reply to criticism or inquiry, that 'They found the system; are not responsible for it; that it will last their day; that they have no time to consider abstract questions, and, in order to remain solvent, must do as their neighbors do.'

"I fight, single-handed, against gin, ignorance, atheism and desperation. However faithfully the day's duties may be performed, in catechizing old and young, inculcating good morals and preaching faith and patience, it is very hard to induce my hearers to believe that a good God made England and is taking care of it. Much do I fear that infanticide has become as common here as in India. Too often young children are almost hated by their parents; the innocent martyrs are born into bodies which betray, in every feature, the sin and sorrow and unbelief that kept wild revel in the mother's heart. The men complain of ailing, cross and slatternly wives; the women of unfaithful and neglectful husbands.

"I began bravely, hoping for a speedy reformation, thinking that, by a faithful presentation of the Gospel, the hidden man of the heart might be reached and quickened; nor

do I yet despair; but the way is long, the night dark and the morning slow in coming. The church is too far from the people. We require something like Wesleyanism, but, as it seems to me, more pungent, more stirring, more tender, and grasping at once the social and the spiritual side of the religious question; a preaching both of sanitary and moral law; but above all, more nearness to the Master. Oh! could we have a second Incarnation, could the Lord Christ reappear in human form, and so communicate Himself a seven-fold portion of the inspiring fire,—if we had Bunyans and Xaviers filling up the ranks of the priesthood, wholly baptised in that infinite charity which is our faith's great essence,—then we might hope in a radical change for the better. The fermenting, decomposing moral elements, if not cared for, will work ruin some day. Evils do not cure themselves by being let alone. Ecclesiastics are far from comprehending the state of affairs, nor do they know how to reach the sad case of England's working men. With us the Dissenters are more successful than the establishment. But the tide will turn some day. I must believe this for my faith is in Him who died to save His people. Yet how I cannot see.

“My brethren nod sagaciously, tap their foreheads, look wise and drop a hint now and then of youthful zeal. There is need of zeal in youth, if age is to become case hardened. Oh! for the Spirit of the Lord! I need Him for myself, but doubly for my poor people.”

This letter, read in the seclusion of Riverside Rectory, called forth an answer from which the paragraph that follows will not be read without interest by those who love to contemplate the coming of a better day. It was brief, profound, conclusive, and after a few prefatory sentences ran thus.

“Salvation is to come to England, my son, through an actual descent of the Lord Christ, not as a Man of Sorrows,

visible to the human eye, but as a Man of Joy and Glory and Love and heroic Courage, taking possession of the hearts of all who vow themselves to a life-battle in His service. Not ours the plan but the execution of the part given us to accomplish; not ours to doubt for one instant that He is sufficient to the moral and social renovation of mankind."

Shall I say too, reader, that Dr. Hartwell's opinion seems to me the truth which the age needs? Can we not both perceive that the amelioration of the race is to be wrought out through men like Charles Bloomfield, women resembling Marian Deschamps; faithful workers in all stations of life, who ask not how the Providence of ages designs to act in future? but are content to be day's-men, accepting as their master the Lord Christ, and vowing themselves to do His will, as, by the word without and the Spirit within He leads the way? Who shall despair of England when the spirit works through delicate and fragile womanhood, and scatters benefactions amidst Crimean death-scenes from the presence of Florence Nightingale?

Whatever truth may exist in craniological theories, the Bumblefuzzes work out no salvation. Great hearts mature great heads; and, in the long run, the children of the best will be the wisest. Gin is bad but atheism worse; heart-atheism, that keeps up a surface-profession because religion is respectable, while inwardly it ravins like a wolf, more utterly bad than the frenzy of the brain, in which desperate men deny the God who made them. Narrow faith is better than no faith. Sleek and smiling optimism will never cure society of its evils or souls of their infirmities. It is pleasant to preach through the newspapers that all is well and growing better every day; but optimism thrives in great nations on the very verge of dark, terrible eras, fateful with ruin.

There were French optimists in the days of Louis XV. and the Dubarry; optimists in old Rome even when the

northern hive was swarming with all its hornets; optimists too before the flood. We may prophecy sugar candy but this will not make the poor man's cup less bitter. Nasal and his kind germinate no millenniums. Easy-going Routine, rowing its wooden barge, and looking all the while behind, cannot ferry us across these fire drifts; nor can the salvation of merry England be farmed out by contract to highest bidders.

We encounter two classes of men, both earnest and well-meaning, but both ineffectual to bring help; those who care for the species as souls, forgetful that they inhabit bodies which possess stomachs and require creature comforts; and those who, in their respect for the tabernacle, lose sight of that within it which shall survive the stars.

Dr. Bushwig may address the paupers in Sloppery Work House as "dearly beloved," but this will carry with it no soul-comfort. Here we come near the root of the evil; our poor neighbor must be dearly beloved in the heart as well as in the prayer book. If, being naturally selfish, we exclaim that no man loves except as an extension of his selfishness, there is an answer which Heaven gives, "With no higher love than that for passport none shall be able to cross the threshold of the Upper Land." If it is responded that we inherit this over-mastering love of self the reply comes again, "The more need of supernatural grace, to cast out the heart's fiend, to bring in the heart's angel."

Superficial reform, which addresses itself to social problems in the mere light of natural laws, forgets the Master Builder, and so its work tumbles about the ears as a consequence. If men have souls at all, those souls are open to Him out of whose visible life, nearly a score of centuries ago, all that is really excellent in modern civilization has come forth, as grows the fair lily from its stem.

There are two methods by which men are endeavoring to obtain the golden life of Heaven. The first is by a "*saute*

qui petit" and "Satan take the hindmost" course. It is an intense selfism, which luxuriates too often in the idea, that, in the other land, we shall be welcomed to a select society, made up of us and our sort.

There is also another system which forgets self, ignores all self-righteousness, builds up no Babel of all the ologies through the egotistic brain, opens its generous bosom to drink in the life of the Hope and Healer of the nations, and strikes out manfully into the deep, at His call, to pluck up drowning men, going down on every side, aye, drowning women and children as well, instead of leaving them to their fate while it selfishly scrambles toward some fancied shore.

Of this latter system Charles Bloomfield was a disciple, believing that the Christian's duty was to lift the perishing, even by the hair of their heads, though they had sunken to the very bottom and clutched the water weeds and stones in their frenzy, determined, as some might imagine, not to rise. A class of new men is coming up, whose genius he may typify; they are noblest in dissent, noblest in the establishment. If he preached earnestly it was because he believed with a full heart, and, having fought his own way to faith, power was given to urge faith on fainting, doubting brothers. Full well was he convinced, by private struggles, that there is a something terrible in every man, which can only be put down by the direct force of the Divine Spirit, but he also knew that all who ask sincerely for grace to overcome receive it in time of need.

Battling bravely against the embodied sins of his parishioners, loving those suffering brothers and sisters with womanly tenderness, and pitying them as a mother does her babe, the young man soon discovered, that, though at first the human heart is cold and obdurate, the mind skeptical and faithless, yet the gospel message, urged with

tongue of fire and heart of charity, is sufficient for the accomplishment of its own blessed work.

Marian Deschamps said little, as report made her acquainted with her lover's faithful ministry, but the heart yearned toward him with a fullness of affection continually becoming more perfect. Be noble yourself, young man, if you desire to call forth the most enrapturing of all affections in the breast of the woman whom you love. In this manner, laboring in a humble curacy, the young heir of the Bloomfields ripened to early manhood. The lad of twenty wears now the noble presence of twenty-six, and Christmas comes again, the sixth since the opening of our narrative.

The autumn had been one of unusual mildness and beauty. The leaves lingered late upon the boughs, as if reluctant to fall; and when at last, yielding to the caresses of the gentle winds, they dropped away, it was as though they sought to nestle lovingly in the lap of earth, their mother, inviting all to rest upon her bosom. The harvest had been abundant, corn was cheap, labor better rewarded than for years,—and so the earth had rest.

This rest seemed also to have fallen upon all the inmates of Wingate. The indictment against Peter Styles having been quashed at the Assizes, all clouds were removed from the character of the honest man; and now it became known also that he had not left the land furtively and in disgrace, but by the advice and aid of the young Squire, trusting still in the Divine hand.

Wingate Hall was filled with merry guests, and Christmas was hallowed by marriage festivities, Hugh Brompton the younger being the happy groom, and his charming Mary the sweet and tender bride. Love was there, the true, celestial Eros, and Hymen graced the nuptials with all his sportive band.

On Christmas eve a surprise awaited the merry-makers. *Minstrels* from the Priory, habited in quaint, olden cos-

tune, sang Christmas glees in the great hall. The grand recluse, whom the expectant groom calls father, has produced, as he half hints, from some old, worm-eaten, black letter volume, a quaint ballad for prelude to his son's approaching happiness. Perhaps that black letter volume is purely a myth, and some rose-winged, star-browed messenger, sowing summer flowers in the fields of fancy, reaps this as the first sheaflet of a harvest of lyrical and tragic melody that is to ripen yet:

THE SALE OF WEDLOCK GRANGE.

Once Cupid was the auctioneer,
And called aloud, upon the 'Change,
A brave estate, of title clear,
That bore the name of Wedlock Grange.

The wooing stars embrace the night,
The shadows clip the dusky range,
The blossoms court the laughing light,
And all are kind at Wedlock Grange.

There all year long the turtles breed,
Nor from their cooing partners change;
The meadows wear no autumn weed;
There are no frosts at Wedlock Grange.

The trees with fruity clusters bend
Of milky fragrance pure and strange;
The golden harvests never end,
For plenty rules at Wedlock Grange.

Three bidders came, at Cupid's call,
And met as rivals on the 'Change,
To win the noble Manor Hall,
And taste the cheer at Wedlock Grange.

First Wealth approached, with purse in hand,
His gold with Cupid to exchange,
But all his ducats turned to sand
Nor won the deeds to Wedlock Grange.

Then Wit drew near, with feathered shaft,
This goodly purchase to arrange,
And Cupid shook his sides and laughed;
But Wit shot not to Wedlock Grange.

With clover honey on his lip,
And Hymen's heart, that knows no change,
Love smiled its lady fair to clip,
And he was Lord of Wedlock Grange.

Shake fern seed over thy garments, reader, and walk invisible, for all who come with love for the Christmas King, springing like a fountain of clear, musical good-will within the breast, shall find a hearty welcome. It is a bright, pleasant night, the stars sparkle like orbs of frosted silver. Never has the Christmas carol sounded with a more heavenly refrain than now, for the Squire is reconciled to his son, and to his son's vocation. Our blooming Mary sits and smiles to think that all is peace again around the household fire. Her eyes are soft and dreamy, and suffused with mists of happy tears.

There is a gay time under the miseltoe in the servants hall. They have brought in the great yule log, and the fire crackles a royal welcome. The rafters, whose massive oak is dark with more than two centuries, are decked with Christmas greens. Peter Styles' wife is there, and little Moll, not sleepy now. A jolly, rosy-cheeked coachman, whom, six years ago, we first observed refreshing himself with ale and cold beef, after a breathless pilgrimage to the summit of that hill difficulty, sometimes called popping the question, is taking off his great coat, and taking in a hearty draught of the Squire's old October. A sturdy *John Junior* has just been set down from his arms, and

stands making round eyes at little Moll, who glances at the incipient lover in tucks, and, roguishly sidling away, whispers, affecting the dialect of a lady of his own age, "Ooo thant tith me, ittle man." A buxom Mrs. John is being unshawled by hospitable hands, rejoicing to meet old friends at a merry-making, finding herself, as also does the good husband, exceedingly comfortable. A score of merry lads and lasses are to have a supper in the house-keeper's room, and, following it, cotillions, and good old country dances. There is kissing under the miseltoe. They keep up the brave customs of our forefathers here.

Late in the evening one enters who has been long expected. He is a little thin and pale, like a man who has taxed himself with brain work. The lips are firmer, the voice deeper, the eyes have won a more sacred light, but to us and ours he is Charlie Bloomfield still. Better thus, than to return with the medal or the ribbon upon the breast, that tells of a gallant charge, when sabres cleft, and bayonets stabbed, and cannon roared, and dying men hurled curses at each other in the mad uproar of battle. Better to save life than destroy it. Best of all to serve Him who saves the very life of lives. A mother's tender arms are round the new-comer's neck, and the first welcome that mother's kiss.

Hark! the Bell-ringers have come. Fine, manly voices are singing outside,

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

The Angels smote their golden lyres;
The night beheld a new-born gem;
It led the tuneful, heavenly choirs,
And was the Star of Bethlehem.

Tossed on the sea of dark despair
Mankind had ceased the flood to stem;—
What music thrills the midnight air?
It is the Star of Bethlehem.

From every orb an angel sings;
Night casts her crown, with every gem,
Before the Lord whom Christmas brings,
The cradled babe of Bethlehem.

The shepherds leave their flocks to find
The gift the season sends to them,—
The Lord of Heaven and earth, enshrined
Within the babe of Bethlehem.

No more shall hate the years oppress
Nor death the weary world condemn.
Awake, rejoice, the Savior bless,—
Behold the Star of Bethlehem.

The young servant of the Lord of Christmas entered his father's presence as the choristers yet continued the carol. The old man grasped the hand, while the tearful eyes looked a welcome which the lips could not trust themselves to utter. But words were spoken that night in the mother's room,—the heart of the household,—and, when that sacred interview closed, the old man rejoiced in the son, and in the son's calling, more than if he had brought a peerage into the family and quadrupled the estate;—rejoiced, too, with a deep, inward happiness not born of family pride, but in the conviction of something better than ever comes through human wealth or fame.

All night there is a keen air, and in the morning the turf sparkles with white frost. The distant bells ring out their Christmas chimes. Ring on, ring on, we cry once more, ring on, brave bells! Let it encircle the Isles, that Christmas music, with airy tongues of benediction. Let it rise to break at last upon the shores of that other, upper land, where the Lord of Christmas welcomes in His guests. Let it fall in silent blessings, till faithful souls are kindled by it to a pentecost of faith and charity, whose benignant voices shall fill the world, and never, never cease.

Christmas reigns in the houses of poor men, who go

to-day up to the house of Him who came, and worship there, stopping, perhaps, as they come out of the church door, beside the mounds in the old grave yard, God's acre, sown with precious seed. Each silvered hillock shines supernal in the Christmas light. The rude stone tablets are as the windows in the Minster, where the saints stand encircled in their glories, all beaming with miraculous flame. Perchance the little children stop at one grave smaller than the rest, and the mild mother drops a tributary tear, while the father tells the hushed and wondering band of their infant brother or sister, who is singing, this Christmas, among the angels.

O worldling! O vague, rationalizing denier of mysteries too vast, too infinite to be made easy and comprehensible to fleshly sense, strike not at the poor man's faith in Him who came to earth this Christmas day. You do more than efface the written lines of the sacred story loved so well. You break the life's staff, shatter the heart's hope, take from the wife, the mother, her faith and comfort in the child who is well, though fleshly vision sees it no more. You rob those tender little ones of sweet and holy thoughts, dropping as from Heaven with a whisper of brothers and of sisters in the skies. That man who takes the Incarnate Christ of Nazareth out of his poor brother's mind and heart, robs the sunlight of the mind's heaven, steals the fruitful Summer from the heart's year, and launches him, in a sinking shallop, on a perilous and unknown ocean, without sail or helm, without compass or oar, without the directing pilot or the guiding star.

There is Christmas cheer this day in the poor man's dwelling, doubtless a simple feast, but more than kingly when we know who is the Master sanctifying its common elements by an imparted blessing. O, for more faith in the poor man's God, whose advent this day commemorates. "More servants wait on man" sings a sweet psalmist in our temple,

"than he takes knowledge of." Truth most blessed! He serves the most and comes the nearest to earth's frail and helpless children, the latchet of whose shoes, even in the days of His humiliation, no human spirit, no transcendent angel was so much as worthy to unloose.

At Wingate Hall, as we have seen, there was a wedding; and, reader, this is not a bad day to wed. In the hour that celebrates the season that beheld the Heavens and the earth married, with such high festivities, it seems right well that we should celebrate our nuptials, humble it is true, yet lasting perhaps, in tender communion of kindred spirits, beyond this ancient orb and its diurnal skies. Ring out again, glad bells, and now with a merrier peal. In every marriage there should be a Christ-coming, and over every pair, though poorest of the poor, a benediction such as dropt from gracious Heaven, when the angels sang "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Perhaps under no roof in broad England were Christmas festivities enjoyed this year among blither, merrier little people than under the roof of Marian Deschamps and by her motherless, fatherless band. On the Holy Eve the Christmas tree, with an appropriate gift from the Lord of the season, met the wondering, smiling eyes, and when all was hushed and the last treasure enjoying infancy's untroubled rest, Marian awaited with an infantile tenderness, mingled with a creeping awe about her heart,—waited on the pure couch sacred to communings with eternal purity and love,—waited,—with sleep gathering about the senses for her Christmas gift.

These minds that work so variously and profoundly, these hands that execute mind-work so thoroughly in Heaven's fields, are always found belonging to such tender hearts that they furnish for a little love as the spring grass for rain. We can travel, following our pillar of cloud and fire, from the *Egypt* of selfish ease to the *Palestine* of a final rest in

Heaven. We can plod through burning sands and encounter foes numberless as the locusts, but must have our manna, else we faint by the wayside. It is a sad mistake to suppose that the heart must shrivel up in order for the mind to become truly wise; that the light of thought can only burn clearly when the lamp of the affections is becoming void of oil.

That loving, humble nature took in such a blessing from the Lord during the hours of its deep slumber, as she had given to others. Good men and women of all ages have left a record of these mysterious breathings,—these sunlit glimpses that are to the soul like melody and morning from another land. If unfulfilled let it pass for a dream produced by some fortuitous commingling of impressions on the soul's eye; if realised it may be styled more than accident. There is a providence that moves within the breast alike in hours of action and seasons of repose.

A second world burst upon her vision, found beyond the narrow glens and cloudy passages of the realm of sleep. The sun shone, mounting to the middle sky, as if its beams were akin to joy and love, to language and devotion, to all that lights up the understanding and makes glad the breast. More than a realised Arcadia, it was the Christian's Heaven. Here grew, in palpable substance, those trees of life that waved their transparent foliage above the dreamer who beheld the splendors of Paradise Lost. Every object seemed fashioned of an element near allied to truth, and goodness, and poetry, and life, and the immortal soul. The seasons dwelt in glad communion with each other, sowing the valleys with spring flowers, gladdening the hill-sides with summer plenty, and ripening upon the purple mountains with autumnal fruits. The leaves exhaled a fragrance which was kindness and delight, and, where the ripening clusters met upon the married boughs, the very tendrils breathed a low and liquid song. The birds, of scarlet and

crimson and ruby and all the rainbow hues, were loving thoughts, bred from human bosoms; and here the deeds of saints on earth stood embodied in cathedral structures surpassing the great work of Michael Angelo. Triumphal music resounded from all these palaces of God. The maiden seemed to herself to float rather than walk, buoyed up on palpable fragrance as with dewy wings, until at last a sensation of delight, full, complete and perfect, took possession of the breast. Now, too, her vision became more penetrative to behold the dwellers in this mystic scene. Some appeared in the distance like little children, crowned with flowers, and disporting in the midst of flocks beside still waters and in vernal meadows; yet, on drawing near, they were discovered as male and female, two in one, seeming to glide in ether rather than press the ground, talking in a language born from the celestial affections and adorned with connubial crowns of gems intertwined with flowers. Their robes were changeful as the brightness of the morning, and woven, apparently, of some element of ethereal light, breathed from the invisible presence of the Divine Spirit.

Attracted toward a lovely company they rose to receive her, and while one placed upon her brows a wreath of these immortal gems and blossoms all united in the song of welcome:

Come to the Hymeneal throng;
Come where the faithful all belong;
From heart to heart the mystic chain
Of being tends to God again.
Through endless years thy bliss prolong:
Come to the Hymeneal throng.

Marianne awoke from this wonder-dream, the mind reposing amidst its own unutterable affections, as does the clear heaven in its bright myriad of stars. It was one o'clock; two hours had passed away. This was Christmas morn.

A calm, undreaming slumber, whose respiration was so low as almost to be insensible, gently placed its seal upon the mind; and now it was as though the breathing essence was withdrawn from its natural habitation. Led upward, by some infinite attraction, to the source of life, she floated above flowers that were vases of living light, yielding up a sweetness that fed the enamored air at once with love, fragrance and melody. She hovered near a temple, whose gates were each a massive pearl, and whose interminable walls glittered with the very thoughts of the Divine Mind, each set within some precious gem, till every knowledge which the angels desire to look into shone apart in its own unfathomable and distinguished brightness.

Gliding over the threshold, an angel met the comer, and said, with a tender smile, "The Master of the mansion will soon appear to welcome you; observe in the meanwhile the pictures that adorn the walls," whereat, conducting her into an apartment, she was left alone.

The first which attracted the eye was her own earthly house. It was a winter night: the ground covered with new fallen snow, in which, overcome with hunger, cold and wretchedness, lay a wailing, helpless child. The same picture also revealed her own image, half asleep yet unable wholly to sink away into its sweet oblivion. A light fell upon her face in the painting, a great light, that touched the ear and quickened all the senses, till the low moanings of the forlorn one, overpowered by the wild wind, were made as audible as if spoken in the room.

A second of the series, painted as if by some art that made thoughts visible, disclosed an humble cottage, and a dying woman clasping in her arms a sobbing babe, soon to be left an orphan. Invisible angels were kneeling around the bedside, one, more lustrous than the rest, holding a crown of light and a robe of spotless lustre for the expiring Christian. Then, led by another viewless one, with awed look, she

beheld her own person gliding to the couch, kneeling there and promising to be a mother to the motherless.

A third, worked up as if each figure stood like a statue in clear relief, revealed her own room on that eventful night when Anteros, Love's impure counterfeit, sought to tempt the soul from duty with visions of a selfish paradise. An angel hovered over the pillow with her own crown, while a lurid fiend was projecting tempting thoughts into the mind to become there dream-pictures before the eye. Another angel at the foot of the couch was holding up a golden cross, whose intense effulgence, falling upon her breast, caused a distinct sensation there of the self-sacrifices involved in becoming the friend and teacher of a family of orphans. In the midst her own spirit appeared, struggling through its vails of flesh and blood against the evil influence of the tempter, and seeking to draw that shining cross into the heart to bear it there.

A fourth, to which she turned her eyes, was the sad, parting interview with Charles Bloomfield. The manly lover was kneeling at her feet and urging his suit, the soul trembling in the bosom like some frightened bird that hears its mate, and longs to fly away, responsive to the wooing call. The features were encircled by unutterable light and the eyes enkindled with celestial glory, all flashing out from the cross, which now, its golden lustre dipped in crimson, seemed to stand within the heart itself, while all the obedient affections of the spirit were kneeling round in worship.

Then, rapidly glancing till her eye had completed the circle of that room, each distinguishing incident of her life was set into its own compartment, wrought into splendid frame work of burnished gold. At last the meaning of it grew into a defined thought, almost overpowering. In accepting the life of self-sacrifice, the life of duty and of faith, she had taken in to her spirit a guiding inspiration, emanating from the bosom of the Crucified One. No deed of mercy

had been planned or executed by her unaided powers. Acting in complete freedom it had been nevertheless her privilege to do the daily behest of human nature's ever-present Friend. No accident, no fortuitous combination of circumstances had ever interfered, to prevent the consummation of the Heavenly Father's benevolent design.

The mystic wonder deepened. Awe upon awe! A group of little children met her sight. They were playing around the Christmas tree. Visioned in the air above them the circumstances under which each had been committed to her protection grew into visible imagery, and here the maiden observed that every one of the band had been sent to her as an especial trust, by the Lord of childhood, the Savior of mankind.

Unable to gaze longer, the sacred lustre becoming more effulgent, as if colored from the vivid hues of the Divine Love, the dreamer bowed the head, when a voice, sweeter than the tones of any angel, thrilled her to the heart's core. "Marian!" The soul seemed to pause and listen through the sense. More sweet, more tender, the charmed air thrilled with it,— "Marian!" On lifting up the eyes to behold, He stood before her, whose feet, when He sojourned on earth, a woman's hand had once anointed with costly fragrance, bedewing them with her tears, and kissing them unrebuked, while pressing to their thrice holy substance her streaming and abundant hair. All that brightness was but the shadow from His face. In a voice without words, that, seeking no inlet of sensation, made the soul all ear to listen, all thought to comprehend, all joy to gather in its preciousness, He bade her welcome. Lowly kneeling at His feet she called Him Lord and Master, desiring to break her very heart and pour it out in meek oblation. But again He smiled, till the look of unutterable love bathed her in its divine element, transfiguring the soul in unearthly light. Then, with one wave of that majestic hand, point-

ing to the imaged group, He said, "Inasmuch as thou hast done it unto the least of these, My little ones, thou hast done it unto Me." And then He laid those hands upon her head and blessed her, saying, "I will be with thee always, and with all those who do my will."

Marian related the vision to none, but soon after found a record of one almost identical, in the life of that devout Christian teacher, Philip Doddridge. In the morning this dear girl met the little band, overflowing with a tenderness toward all its members never felt before. Those indeed can be loving whose hearts are fountains for a full stream from Him who is Love itself.



CHAPTER XXII.

THE FORTUNES OF THE WALLINGFORDS.

The Wallingfords were an old family of New England in colonial times. Their quaint mansion, built of rough stone, adorned with brick facings imported from the Mother Country, and with an escutcheon of arms in bold relief above the entrance, remained a score of years ago in one of the oldest towns of Massachusetts. A friend of Hampden and his compatriots, Sir Miles Wallingford, of Riverside, having put in jeopardy honors and estates by manful resistance to the edicts of the Star Chamber, after striving to reconcile the stormy elements that convulsed the Court of Charles the First had sided with the Commons, distinguished himself in the Army of the Parliament, and served as one of the wisest of the statesmen of the Protectorate.

On the restoration of the Stuart line, life being forfeited by an act of attainder, the estates being sequestered and the family seat at Riverside conferred upon a prime favorite of the Merry Monarch, Sir Lionel Devereux, after many adventures the exile found a quiet harbor for old age in Plymouth Colony.

Many a broad acre, which had owned the sway of the Wallingfords from the days of the Plantagenets, devolved with the fief of Riverside to the new man. The antique mansion beheld gay revels after his accession. There, as tradition averred, Charles II. had enjoyed a May day revel, with dances around the Maypole, and bear baitings on the Green. Humble village lasses, who had scattered flowers

before the royal train, making their grand entrance through the Park gates, had lived to bemoan the hour in shame and sorrow.

There Anthony Hamilton had jested with Rochester and the Lovelaces of the day. Young John Churchhill had walked apart, perchance happier than after the stormy fights of Ramillies and Blenheim had wreathed laurels amidst the dark shadows upon his brow. There Butler had spun a canto of Hudibras and Dryden taxed the fertile fancy for quaint figures and cunning rhymes. Gay and witty women, the butterflies of the hour, whose portraits are now to be seen at Hampton Court, painted by Peter Lely, danced attendance upon royalty in tapestried saloons, and gathered roses that harbored wasps to sting them to the heart before many days.

The estate, which passed in this manner into the possession of the Devereux's, had seen the family from that time its undisturbed occupants, adding to the old mansion wing, turret and tower, and rising in the peerage till its representative bore the title, Earl of Riverside.

Traditions of the Wallingfords lingered after all traces of the exile and his descendants; stories of knightly and noble deeds keeping their memory green. One of them, as far back as the Crusades, had built the old church of St. Winifred at Richmanstown, leaving a perpetual fund for the maintenance of twelve poor men, on condition that a mass should be said for his soul's repose; and a worn, brass tablet in the chancel, bearing his name, yet concealed the entrance to the family vault in the crypts below. The escutcheon, with its legend, "Right makes Might," was still to be found on time-worn tombs and memorial tablets, both in the walls of St. Winifred and its church-yard. The shield and sword that Hugo, Baron of Riverside, another of that ancient line, bore at Ascalon and Gaza, when he followed Richard the Lion-hearted to

the Holy Land, with many a piece of armor and faded portrait are still kept at Brompton Priory among the choicest of the relics there. Old men, cotters and tenants of the estate, still repeat the distich, now become a prophecy,

“When Richmanstown shall cross the fen,
Young Wallingford comes home again;”

But the younger generation attach to it no more importance than they do to Midsummer Night's Dreams or sermons on the Millennium.

Passing through varying fortunes in the New World, the descendants of the banished knight still kept untarnished their noble name. Too genial for the taste of his narrow, ascetic neighbors, who, after being persecuted in Old England, became persecutors in the New, insisting on keeping Christmas, although the observance of the day had been pronounced papistical and prelatical, the brave exile gave cause of offence to the outwardly righteous of the colony, being fined ten pounds on one occasion for having Christmas pies made on the twenty-fifth of December, and admonished by the General Court for the crime of decorating his mansion with Christmas-greens. He was also complained of for having been heard to remark, that “He hoped the day would come when every maid in New England would be kissed by her true bachelor under the mistletoe;” and also accused, before the same authorities, of having caused a certain profane and ungodly drink called “bishop” to be concocted and drank by his servants.

Emigrating once more, in an old age, “frosty yet kindly,” he found a home on the banks of the “great river of the Hudsons,” where the province of the Nieu Netherlands, with its town of Nieu Amsterdam, had been recently taken possession of in the name of the King of England, and rechristened after the King's brother, the Duke of York. Obtaining a partial amnesty with the new reign, and deal-

ing with the Indians in peltries, he turned the remnant of his fortune to good account and built a manor house, also called Riverside, where the noble stream, emerging from hills picturesque as those of the Rhine, expands into a miniature sea.

His Dutch neighbors, the Vanderdoncks, Van Twiggles, Beekmans, Boermans and Tenbroecks, sturdy, well-conditioned lords of the soil, not yet enlightened concerning the wickedness of mince pies, fell, as tradition narrates, with an evident relish and an unbounded appreciation, into the custom which he introduced, of keeping Christmas night beside a roaring fire, of singing Christmas carols and kissing under the miseltoe. The ancient lived to see the son of his old age a noble youth, and then passed where all unjust attainders are reversed in Heaven's chancery.

Major General Wallingford, his only son, fell bravely in one of the expeditions against the Canadas. When the stormy days of the Revolution began, destroying the peace of families and turning near kinsmen against each other, the only son of this Wallingford of the second generation, bearing the grandfather's name and possessed of the same indomitable spirit, leaving the estate in charge of a steward and bidding a tender farewell to his newly-wedded bride, volunteered in the Continental Army, became an aid of the Virginian planter whose name now shines so bright in the world's book of heroes, and, sharing in the fatality which seemed to doom the extinction of the old line, never returned, but left his bones upon the battle-field.

The estate, dwindling away under the shrewd mismanagement of the steward, soon became embarrassed, till, at last, all that remained to the widow, bearing in her arms a young son, born shortly after its father's death, was the old manor-house with the adjacent grounds, and a few small tenements in the thriving town since grown to be the third of the great cities of the civilized world.

The blow which had fallen on the family at the time of the Restoration seemed not yet to have spent its force. The widow's son, generous to a fault, with an ear always open to the cry of the needy, but with a mind prone to untried projects, after more than one ill-starred undertaking, married when advanced in years, selecting an orphan of rare personal beauty and merit, but in destitute circumstances, passing the closing years of life in a condition not far removed from poverty, and leaving, on his decease, an only child.

The lad grew upon the banks of the Hudson, loving his father's memory, and nursing high and noble thoughts. Thrown much into the past, he found delight and companionship in those books which recount the brave deeds of the valiant spirits of England's heroic days. Young Miles Wallingford, last of his kin, was no common nature. The old tree had put forth one consummate flower before the decaying stem yielded to the blast. The lad was called proud and uppish among the villagers, being reserved and silent, and out of place either in whittling or bargaining. Nevertheless, to congenial companions, he was better than a library, and, making few friends of his own age, made fast ones.

When that gentle mother bade him, in her departing hour, to live first of all for the sake of duty, and to make an oracle and guide of the sacred volume, preserved as an heir loom with the genealogy of the Wallingfords upon its dusky pages, the youth, kneeling, pledged his knightly word, and well did he keep the vow. From that time an element of gentleness, before deficient, seemed to blend into and become a part of the firm, masculine character. A touching meekness was observed by those who knew him best, and a large portion of the day devoted to study, reading and meditation.

Two retainers of the family alone remained as servants

of the household, they too decayed with years, and wasting as does the snow. The winds made wild work in the deserted rooms of the mansion. Venerable sycamores and poplars, dead in the tops, stood sentinel around the place where they had flourished in their prime, displaying in the spring time a leafage growing scantier year by year, and shaking down with every autumn the poor, thin remnants of their foliage before the first, rude touches of the frost, as if they knew that this was the last roof of the Wallingfords, and with it were determined to grow old and decline, and slowly moulder and pass away.

In this young man blended two natures, the philosopher and the man at arms, both slumbering, as do the buds of March upon a forest tree. It was his delight in youth to ride the wildest horses, to scale the most dangerous precipices and to venture abroad at all hours and in the stormiest weather, apparently from the mere love of breasting and braving the elements. Books that spoke of true and manly deeds were dear as the apple of his eye; but courage was held in slight estimation while merely that of the animal spirits. It was his belief that actions, truly gallant, spring from high resolves; that force comes from mind, instead of muscle, and that chivalry ripens from the fairest flowers of sentiment.

Central in his mind, and indeed its crowning thought, the idea grew habitual that the vein and fountain of a noble life must be in pure and innocent affections. Healthy to the least grain and fibre, no deliriums or insanities rioted in that young blood. Inheriting stateliness and symmetry of person through heroic ancestors, he stood erect as the pine and tough yet pliant as the hickory. That original training brought out manhood at an early age and sixteen found him more self-reliant than the caudled son of doting parents at forty. The deep-set eyes beneath broad arches indicated *insight* combined with practical understanding. The lesson

which history teaches, that labor alone builds up men and nations, work of heart, of head and of hand combined,—sinking deep into the virgin soil of this fresh nature, deposited there the germs of a noble future.

That his ancestors had bravely fought for liberty of speech, of conscience and of opinion, when as yet this huge, transatlantic Europe was but a seedling, he well knew, and this served to lead the mind, step by step, into the philosophy of human rights and chartered institutions; nor was he long in discovering that the world was old yet new, thatched over with precedents and customs like the veriest mouldering hut, but containing within itself a true Aladdin's palace. He loved the world, rejoiced to be born heir of such wealth of field and flood, of sky and landscape, of sacred traditions and of human loves nestling within the breast and cradled in its topmost thoughts, as are the birds that build their nests in the highest boughs of the elms and in sunlit chasms at the peaks of mountains.

This last Wallingford was now on the verge of his majority. He could give and lend but was unfit for bargaining. Longing for a profession in which to apply those elastic powers to practical affairs, he divined, at once, that the lever of opinion in the new world is the press, that the tournaments of the new age are contested by champions who mount the chargers of the understanding and bear down upon their foes with lances welded and fashioned in the furnaces of the moral will. So the man at arms became the printer, saying to himself, "Houses are built from foundations upward. If I am going to work through types let me first work with them."

When the heir of this American Riverside took his post in the village printing office, a manly, graceful youth, still possessed of a remnant of the ancestral estate, he lost caste, and ceased, in the opinion of some, to be a gentleman. Taking hold, with hearty good will, of these new imple-

ments, becoming a skillful compositor and pressman, and keeping thought and purpose secret till the hour should arrive for action, he soon became the office foreman. The County Journal improved in mechanical appearance under his hands, and then he said, "Good horse, I have tamed you: now bear me on my life's journey." So, purchasing with his scant resources an interest in the humble sheet, it became a vehicle in which to test opinions by the judgment and criticism of cotemporaries, to feel the popular pulse, to learn the art of governing in the world of ideas, to bring the faculties of the intellect into keen, full play, and then to send abroad the winged thoughts, that, like the arrows of the Parthian, become lightnings, enkindling the air to flame. "The pen is mightier than the sword;" the press the lifter up and the puller down of men; the fourth estate. The young man had not mistaken his providential call.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A LEGACY.

Roger Benbow, in the hour preceding decease, entrusted to Peter Styles, as we have seen, the valuable documents affording evidence of the identity of Charity Green with the lost heiress, and making known the place of her concealment, in search of which he had traveled so far. The Forrester explained to the confidant such particulars as till now had been kept within the seclusion of his own breast, and then added, "Styles, I wish that I had patterned my life more after what I have heard you read in the Holy Book. My race is run. Promise that you will carry out my instructions concerning the papers, and then I shall die in peace." The promise was made: and he continued,

"You will be hunted and waylaid, if possible, for the ten thousand pounds, before you leave this den of outlaws. Immediately make your way to the steamer on which we have secured passage, obtain a shelter on board over night at any cost, and keep awake and armed till the vessel leaves. The Botany Bay thieves, who were the accomplices of Chivers on the hulk, took to the water and are doubtless in search after you ashore. There is every probability for supposing that foul means will be made use of, when it is discovered that the secret is in your keeping, by parties in England, to make way with you. In these papers we have a sure guide to the young Countess. Two years ago the gipsy left her in charge of this Buncle, a wrecker, fisherman and water rat, in a locality upon the eastern shore of

Long Island. You must find her at once. On arriving at the steamer, make duplicates, seal up the originals, and place them in the hands of the British Consul at Panama, directed to Job Trusty, Esq., Steward at Riverside; enclosing also a statement of the manner in which we obtained them at Feather River, and the particulars of this last affray. Mention as well that I shot John Chivers through the heart after he had killed the whipper-in. Say to Trusty that the two hounds, Swift and Beauty, and my old setter, Dash, must be taken care of as long as they live.

"Keep the papers which you copy as a guide for your own operations. Retain the funds in my possession, which are sufficient for the present, and send home your own ten thousand pounds, to be received by Dr. Hartwell, or any other friend whom you may select, for the benefit of your family, in case of accident or loss of life; with an injunction to keep the affair secret, either till you return safely or till they have reason to suppose that you have gone after me. When you discover the young lady, watch her as you would your own soul; but do not attempt to take her to England till you have written to the executors that she is recovered." Then, beckoning the faithful friend nearer, the Forester whispered. "Before she was stolen, one day, her father said, 'I'll mark you, my little beauty, should there be any deviltry at work.' So, taking her from the nurse, he pricked on the left arm a letter R, and colored it with indelible ink. There is besides, a birth mark, a little crimson heart, upon her left breast." In a few moments after the earthly career of Roger Benbow was at an end.

Attired as a serving man, in stout garments, designed for comfort rather than show, a passenger by the Golden Gate steamer, Philip Bulwinkle by name, deposited shortly after with the British Consul at Panama, a bulky package, addressed to Job Trusty, Esq., Riverside. Arriving in

safety at its destination, the executors of the estate at once perceived the importance of maintaining strict secrecy.

The suit at law between the contestants for the right of succession under the entail, having been decided against the Scotch branch of the family, and acting under advice of counsel, the Rector of Richmanstown now proceeded to prosecute his claim to the estate, serving writs on the tenants, requiring them in future to pay all sums due as rentals into the hands of his banker. This forced the matter at once to an issue, the executors claiming right of possession as trustees of the property and guardians of Rosa, Countess of Riverside, until her majority; attesting also, that, though absent from the country, she was still in existence, to the best of their knowledge and belief; Dr. Bushwig averring the infant grand-daughter of the late Earl to have been abducted, and to have perished of the small pox, at Coddlington Green. The executors were enabled to maintain possession till a decision of the suit.

Once more let us venture within the Parsonage of St. Winifred's. The seventh year since the Earl's death has now begun. It will be seven years the ensuing Christmas since Charity Green stood in the Rector's presence, imploring protection in his Master's name.

The divine, grown more portly, more dignified, as prospects to the earldom brightened, has determined to set household affairs in order, and the first called up for judgment is the valet, John having waxed insolent of late and demeaning himself as more than gentleman's gentleman. Of the serving man's caves-dropping proclivities we have had ample witness, and other traits of character and habits of life have oozed out through the gipsy house-breaker, who informed Hugh Brompton the younger, concerning the robbery at Wingate.

It is an ill omen for a man when his domestics grow insolent. The valet received the rebuke so justly merited with

an air of cool assurance, and informed Dr. Bushwig, who hinted a discharge on the spot, that he had no disposition to remain longer, Sergeant Parks, of London, having written that if desirous of coming up to town he might put him in the way of a nest-egg.

The lofty looks of the Rector were humbled. The chance shot did execution. At once the suspicion seized the divine that the valet had in some manner obtained an inkling of his precious secret. As the servant proceeded to state that Mr. Trusty, of Riverside, had also kindly offered to assist in settling him in life, his alarm became serious. The fellow turned with a polite bow toward the door. The valet was guilty of falsehood, having communicated with neither Parks nor Trusty, but a bad conscience is unable to discriminate. With his hand on the knob, the lackey shot a final arrow, remarking that "he would prove that he owed no grudge, by imparting a piece of information. A man who used to be well known about Riverside, in young Lord Robert's time, John Chivers by name, had been killed in California, and a friend had mentioned that he was shot by Roger Benbow. One present at the time, and a pal of the gipsy, was in the country now, and could be seen."

In this instance the statement was correct, Handy Ben and Cunning Joe both being in London. From these parties, or those in their confidence, the gentleman's gentleman had learned that the gipsy was dead, having been killed in an attempt at the murder of the Forester.

The Rector trembled. If Chivers had perished, bearing the secret to the grave, it was all well; but if it still existed, into whose hands might the information have fallen? Could it be possible that Benbow had been employed by the exco-
utors to ferret out the hiding-place of Charity Green, and that his quarrel with Trusty and the lamentable story of the loss of property had been all a ruse? The sporting

parson had followed the hounds, but was now in the predicament of poor Reynard, who, while trotting home with a fat goose on his back, hears suddenly the deep baying of dogs. Affecting nonchalance, he quietly replied, "Give my respects to Squire Parks, if you should see him in London. I am sorry to turn off so fine a fellow on account of forgetting his place on one or two occasions;" and resumed the newspaper, as if intimating that the audience was at an end. Then dropping it, he added, seemingly by a sudden thought, "As you are going down to London, just mention to Parks, before he engages you, that I can identify one of the men implicated in the robbery at the Bloomfields.

Hezekiah Pinch, a lover of gold above all things human or divine, had found in Dr. Bushwig a frequent borrower. Supposing that his succession to the earldom was inevitable the miser had loaned large sums already, the rates of interest being enormous. Unwilling, perhaps, that any others should have the picking of this golden-feathered bird, Pinch had dropped a remark like this: "Do you keep your plate-chest under sufficient lock at night, Doctor?" The rejoinder was in transatlantic fashion, with a query, "Is there any danger of robbery?" This brought out the somewhat equivocal response, "What was your man doing on the night when the Bloomfields missed their plate?" Then, as if fearful of betraying too much, the usurer cautiously whispered, "This is between friends; I would not suspect your man on any account."

Bushwig nursed the hint, and now flew it after John, much as a falconer casts off his hawk. The master and the man were players of equal skill; the game seemed a drawn one. The valet, if alarmed, did not betray fear, but, looking the Rector squarely in the face, with an air of dogged resolution, muttered, "Lawyer Parks offered me a thousand pounds if I could tell him the conversation that took place

the night that you had Jack Chivers in this room. I think of going to London, seeing him, and making a clean breast of it." Did Satan whisper in the false heart? Pausing a moment, that every word might take effect, he proceeded: "Trusty hinted in private that Chivers stole the girl the night he burned the coach-house."

This statement was in part false and in part true. It was not true that he had been offered a thousand pounds as a bribe, but the astute rogue was convinced that he could sell a thousand pounds worth of secrets to the attorney, provided it was possible to obtain access some night to the Rector's private papers.

Eyeing his man for a moment, the divine came to a rapid conclusion. Had the valet been possessed of any real secret, a liberal douceur would have purchased it before this; yet, doubtless, the man was working upon his fears from a vague suspicion. Taking the offensive, he rejoined: "It will not do, my man; it will not do. All transactions between Mr. Chivers and myself are at the service of the world. If you think to alarm me with the view of being bribed to keep a close mouth, you are simply making an enemy where you might have obtained a friend. If the gipsy is dead, as you remark, I regret to hear of his bloody end; but it was no more than could have been expected. Now, harkee! breathe one word affecting my character,—hint one suspicion that I instigated the abduction of which you speak, and to-night you sleep within the doors of the jail." With this the Rector, as if he were a judge on the bench pronouncing sentence, came to a pause.

He was now dealing with an adept in deceit. The thin varnish of decorum, acquired by contact with gentlemen, crackled and exhaled, while the aboriginal ruffian stood out, scowling, burly and defiant, answering: "Dr. Bushwig, which has the handle, and which takes the edge and point of the weapon, remains to be seen. My price is five thou-

and pounds, not a doit or stiver less." Now his eyes glared with unrestrained passion. "Do you think that I would have been dogged about the Rectory seven long years and more, if I had not expected to make it up out of the rich Earl in consideration for keeping the Earl's secrets? There is in London a man who writes to me a letter which, with your permission, I will read :

'Dear Jack: One Phil Bulwinkle, before Benbow died, which he did the next day, on a brig in the harbor, took the old man's papers, the ones that he filched from Chivers when the tent was burned, and started with them for the States. Joe followed, and on the Isthmus found means of getting at his leathern belt. You, being in the service of this Dr. Bushwig, will know better what they are worth than we do. One of them is a bond for ten thousand pounds, but there are letters besides. See what you can do with them for us, and mum's the word, if so be there's a secret.' "

The valet added, "I have written back that they may expect me in a day or two. Now, Doctor, for five thousand pounds I am your man. Just make out a nice little annuity of two hundred and fifty pounds a-year and you shall be put in possession of all the documents that Benbow took from Chivers. If you do not care to buy them,"—and now the ruffianly look which had receded came forth in full force—"why, then, I shall make the best of them in the market."

The bone-setter, nimble with the pen, had made his duplicate of the bond very nearly a fac-simile of the original. A poor laboring man by birth, young Bloomfield, seeing the fine mind and the quick and ready wit, had urged him, on departing, to apply himself to the common branches of education. The fingers, quick with all they undertook, mastered at once the mechanical difficulties in the art of writing. The honest man had beguiled a weary hour in

his stateroom on the steamer by engrossing the documents as neatly as could have been done by any lawyer's clerk.

As the valet finished the mind of the Rector was made up. Betraying no agitation he remarked quietly, "I have business in London the day after to-morrow. Bring these papers to my lodgings. It may be worth your while." As both now were scheming to circumvent each other they relapsed into the old relations: Dr. Bushwig was again the Rector, waited on with all obsequiousness by the Rector's gentleman.

In an interview, held at the time specified with the shrewd felon who had possessed himself of the documents, Dr. Bushwig was, or seemed to be, more successful than with his own servant, pointing out with a flourish that the bond, neither witnessed nor stamped, possessed no intrinsic value except as waste paper; showing too on inspecting the letters, that these were all in one handwriting and of no earthly use. Cunning Joe affected to be convinced, suddenly acquiesced in the Rector's logic and withdrew. After the door was closed, beckoning the servant near, he briefly observed, "I shall not discharge you, John. Get me the papers at once. They are worthless, but might as well be out of the way, and Oh!—consider the annuity arranged. One hour afterward the papers were burned.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MARIE DEVEREUX.

The loveliest women are those whose beauty is of slow growth. The mother of Charity Green, secluded for thirteen years within the walls of a convent, had become, unconsciously to herself, one of those superbly beautiful beings whom Titian and Giorgione loved to portray. A certain infantile softness and naivete combined with a languid melting look in her large eyes and a dreamy repose of manner, as if the mind were lost in the reveries of some delicious dream. A person ripened to the very perfection of charm, and a demeanor gliding now into the artlessness of a child and then into the grace of a queen, invested her with attributes, equally dangerous if misused, both to the young enthusiast inexperienced in the world's ways and to the cold and calculating disciple of Society and Fashion. Now but in her thirty-third year she bloomed anew in those stately circles of which she had been in youth one of the fairest of the fair. Marie had been beloved in the convent as if she were an angel; lingering so long in that twilight of the mind which cannot be called either sanity or delirium. Retaining there a passionate love of birds, flowers, music and the open air; free too, in consequence of that merciful closing of the natural memory, from her recollection of heart-break as Robert Devereux's misused wife, and from the harrowing griefs which followed little Rosa's abduction, she unfolded in that secluded place as if she were a tropical plant, which, first germinating in some northern latitude, where frosts

have nipped the promise of its earlier bloom, has been transported to its own balmy clime to bud again and to bring forth each veiled and hidden beauty.

Ceasing, after a time, to retain the singular powers of the somnambulist, her extatic dreams were at an end. A full memory of the past returned, while sweet, womanly dignity took the place of the *abandon* and childishness which had accompanied her singular disease. She left the convent a frank and noble woman, but with a veiled heart.

Beset, on re-entering into society as a lovely widow, with many suitors on every hand, the sad experience of early life induced a complete mistrust of gallant wooers and their professions, but the reserve which had become so natural added only to the piquancy of her charms in the estimation of the courtly and titled gentlemen who were rivals for her favor. Amply maintained by the jointure, inheriting also from her deceased mother no inconsiderable fortune, Lady Devereux lingered for a short time in the midst of old family friends, rejoicing in recovered health and beauty, and then, at the earnest solicitation of Dr. Hartwell, determined on revisiting England.

At Riverside the lady was received with all the honors of a queen. The State apartments were opened for the first time since the death of the Earl. The county was alive with interest at this unexpected return, and the fascinations of Lord Robert's widow became the theme of bachelors old and young. Marrying men were on the *qui-vive*. Once more the conservatory became a little world of splendid and fragrant bloom. By the terms of the will, Riverside Hall had been set apart for her reception in case of restoration to health, and now, maintaining stately hospitality, it seemed to be a source of gratification to resume old acquaintances and to form new ones.

Dr. Bushwig, not without many a misgiving as to his reception, was among the first to welcome the lady cousin,

and was received in full dress. The finished gentleman threw into his manner a double portion of kindly courtesy, alluded, in the conversation which ensued, feelingly, yet with a subdued, tender pathos, to the changes which had taken place since they last met, touched delicately on his position as next in the entail, and, while congratulating her upon this return to the family seat in redoubled beauty, hoped that they might become more than mere ceremonious neighbors. On repeating his visit she called him "cousin," apologised, with a charming blush, for the morning toilette, showed the conservatory, chatted gaily about birds, flowers, and the last new poem, and left him, without intending it, as near to love as an utterly hardened heart can ever be to Heaven.

Selfish voluptuary was the Rector, the smoldering passions of his nature began to stir, and, driving home, it was to dream of her. Not his the vision which Charlie Bloomfield enjoys in slumber, when, amidst the wafted aromas of Elysian fields, the radiant image of his Marian passes by, while cherub infants strew the path with flowers. Not his the vision which comforts Peter Styles in his lonely wanderings, when, borne from far away, a tender voice consoles the thirsty spirit with plaintive hymns of hope and immortality, dropping the while a kiss of pure honey without gall on innocent lips that never crave unholy pleasures. Dr. Bushwig has no such fancies. His imagination is kindled with such a dream as Sardanapalus might have found amidst the unsubstantial clouds of Hades; beauty that fires the senses and that maddens the soul, beckoning on and calling him to follow through avenues of endless bloom, but forever, mirage-like, receding, and lost in nothingness at last.

The Rector thought himself in love,—coveted this ripe beauty, doated on every charm, hung enraptured on each melting accent, and determined that she should become his

wife. In order to remove every barrier, the adept in craft and guile affected to make her a confidante,—brought up the subject of the suit at law with the Scotch cousin, and its decision, and then ventured to tread upon dangerous ground—little Rosa. With low, hypocritical voice, he feigned sorrow, and remarked, that having, as counsel stated, absolute evidence of the child's decease, he had been forced to put his documents on record and unwillingly brought into controversy with the executors; to ingratiate himself still further, adding, that the suit was entirely amicable, and that none would rejoice more heartily than himself were Rosa still alive.

The widow listened, sighed and said little, nor did her manner betray aught beside cousinly kindness. Hovering around this pure, inaccessible flame, the suitor fed himself with a warmth which added at first to the manner a new courtliness and called back a youthful vivacity of disposition. Lady friends declared that the Rector was becoming absolutely handsome, congratulating Lady Devereux on thawing this anchorite from the frost of his hermitage. The divine began to preach again, while the Rev. Dapper Plummery quietly subsided into a secondary place, pronouncing his most flowery discourses, and attracting an audience by the charm of fine elocution. Perhaps that shrewd mind knew that women love security in the married relation, and are partial to clergymen because they identify the servant of the temple with the spiritual perfections, which it is his duty to illustrate to the world. The Doctor wore religion gracefully, passing, by easy transitions, from sacerdotal to secular dignities.

In his private hours, keen tortures began to afflict the spirit. His meditations were of a sombre hue, and unspoken thoughts might have shaped themselves into a soliloquy like this: "I have now a double stake. What if I lose?—but I will not lose. Lady Devereux does not consider my

attentions disagreeable. She is evidently fond of position. If, as Rector of Richmanstown, I might fail, as Earl of Riverside there is little danger. We are well matched."

Then, to subtle calculation, succeeded that frenzy which men of the world mistake for love. The honeyed poison circulating through the veins was turning them to fire. Communing with himself, it was to call her "soul's soul" and "life's life," who must be won or he would die. Obtaining the widow's miniature by stealth, it lay from that time concealed against the heart. Did he trace in those soft, infantile features, any resemblance to a child's face that once looked out for a moment beseechingly through the gathering darkness of a Christmas night. He worshiped the ground which this enchantress stepped upon so lightly, and would have made his neck a footstool for those dainty feet. Did he think ever of another pair of little feet that once moved lightly upon that study floor, thrust out by him to plod to the alms-house through drifted snow? Did he think ever of where those feet might be wandering, amidst what scenes of want, or over what dark paths, where vice and hunger contend in noisome alleys, and lost babyhood is maddened almost with the passions of fiends? Did he think ever of that Divine Mercy who once walked the world in visible human shape, and who moves forever with an invisible presence, casting gleams of visitation on every human soul?

Shallow minds who reason against Providence would have said, "See how selfish wisdom wins the day. Styles served God and is an exile. Little Charity Green trusted in her Friend. That Friend was unable to induce a holy man to give her shelter; unable to prevent the gipsy Chivers from tearing the gentle form from its last shelter; unable to prevent a miserable wrecker's wife from making that helpless, tender one a household drudge. She followed Him and He gave her as companions a drunken Indian woman and

her half-breed son. She is a charity child even now, eats charity bread and goes to a charity school; while a cloud with blood upon its fringes, and serpents in its breast, is lowering and threatening to burst above the unconscious head, and sweep the graceful maiden away as with a whirlwind. Here is a man who serves the world. Soon he will stand amidst his peers in the noblest assembly of the earth.—These ancient estates, these pleasures that gratify the senses, these honors that dignify the name,—Fortune comes and heaps them at his door. This man made the daughter of that fair lady an outcast and a wanderer upon the face of earth, yet see! she smiles upon his suit, leans on the gallant arm and learns already to be delighted with his whispered vows. Abstract rectitude may be plausible in theory but it never pays.”

Reader, have you ever reasoned thus. Have you ever thought, “Abstract goodness is beautiful; a life of simple, manly devotion to the right, swerving not from any sacrifice imposed by highest conviction, is very grand, very noble; yet still but a glorious dream, too ethereal for this mundane sphere, where everything tangible costs money.” Have you ever sighed, yet with that sigh thrust youth’s fair ideal far away, as something that has no place in practical life? Have you ever thought inly, “I must do as the world does if I would succeed as the world succeeds.” If so, reconsider these conclusions; they are Satan’s fallacies; not God’s truth.

Man of mature, middle life as he was, and widower as well, Squire Brompton of the Priory found time on a pleasant morning to pay his respects to Lady Devereux. The coarse fox hunter verging toward fifty is only fit to follow the hounds with Squire Drone, and afterward to muddle himself over male gossip, but culture, when taken into a kindly heart, puts off age. A quiet, leisure life amidst books, pictures, beautiful scenery and courtly society had

brought this richly endowed mind to a period of life removed equally from blustering April and bleak November.

So August drew near, bravely appavelled, and met the blooming charms of rosy and rounded June. August came talking of the Turners in his gallery; of a picture from Rome, by a new man, an American, Page, whom some thought was to rival Titian, and of a lovely cattle piece by a fresh comer in the art-world, Rosa Bonheur. His Gainborough's and Wilsons were now surpassed. Imperishable flowers,—they were not born to blush unseen. Lady Devereux must do him the honor of a visit. Young Mrs. Brompton had called.

A beautiful woman is never more fascinating to the mere eye of taste than when amidst the elegances and comforts of the boudoir. The drapery is selected and the light softened to harmonize with the tints of the complexion. Her favorite perfumes float languidly upon the senses to breathe a welcome. The apartment itself wears an appearance of tidy disorder, being disarranged with art and for the sake of the picturesque. Just one stray ringlet contrasts its dark hue with the rosy bloom of the countenance against which it dares to rest. What wonder if we fall hopelessly in love with the owner of that presumptuous curl.

But our knight of the Priory knew that man as well as woman seems to change with the surroundings, and, feeling himself slightly out of place, supported by one of the delicate rosewood chairs at Riverside, knew that the paternal mansion became them better, where the Bromptons of sixteen generations had waxed mellow and hospitable, like peaches in the sun. There was his boudoir, nor was he unaware that, standing in the soft light of the gallery, he might compare well with any of those grand ancestral portraits by Holbein or Vandyke. The man of noble presence is always dignified by his pictures and library.

Discoursing well on art topics, the enthusiasm which had found little vent in the practical delighted to expatiate upon the merely agreeable and beautiful; but, as the two conversed and the hour glided unconsciously away, old thoughts, buried from youth, revived, and fountains that the arid sands of worldliness had covered gushed forth again. Perhaps with this returning sense of youth and spring a softer light was in the eye; the widow felt the charm.

From the bay window in the library of the Priory was an exquisite view of hill and dale and water and waving foliage. The pictures were seen, the visit made. There, when the tender stars arose, culture asserted its supremacy, and poetry and romance, spiced with worldly wit, not sufficiently intense to be painful, made the lips of ripe manhood more musical, perchance more fascinating, than would have been the finest raptures of the youthful idealist. How Beckford might have wooed, with a touched heart, amidst the splendors of Fonthill. Perhaps Horace Walpole might have pressed a suit more successfully than elsewhere in the study where the *Castle of Otranto* was written, amidst the ornate attractions of Strawberry Hill. The portrait appears to best advantage in its own frame.

A congenial circle met that day at the Priory, Dr. Hartwell accompanying the Lady of Riverside. They saw the pictures, lunched, grew merry, and then the Rector was called away, briefly, on some ecclesiastical affair.

The sun was going down, as, with many apologies to the fair widow and the courtly knight, the excellent divine returned. Of these apologies there was no need. August quietly pointed lovely June's attention to the fine face of the old man, lit up by the enthusiasm of his calling, the brow that of a sage, the lips those of a child, the eyes kindling to the first look of an angel. She had seen that afternoon many a sunny nook and costly cabinet and gleaming landscape in this cultured mind. The Squire was contented

with the footing on which he stood. The lady had impressed him as entirely different from any former acquaintance. It was as if one of Shakspeare's or Spenser's women had stepped out of some rare folio, to bind him in hopeless rassalage with one bewildering, heart-stirring glance.

Age does not depend upon time, but upon feeling. A courtship between fifty and thirty-five may be more romantic than one where nineteen worships sixteen for the white frock and the blue ribbons, the flowing ringlets and the rosebud lips. Squire Brompton was in love, not after the frenzied and idolatrous fashion of his rival, but with a fond intensity that made the intellect subsidiary to the roused and glowing heart. Heaven is nearer to us always than we deserve, but Providence was teaching this child of fortune through a messenger, powerful to reach, and fresh and innocent to revive the best emotions.

We have too many sad Jeremiads about growing old. For the last score of ages the world has been waxing young. Since that first Christmas night when the happy shepherds woke to a discourse of music from the stars, old mother earth has been putting away her wrinkles. The races of Christendom are younger now than they were two thousand years ago. Let us take this thought and nurse it for our winter fires.

Too many plants of sombre aspect are cultivated in the mind's garden. The epochs of a worthy life should be marked by a succession of festivals and the best wine kept to the last of the feast. A man of fifty can love more ardently, more truly than a boy of fifteen. The woman who has kept the good plants in the heart's conservatory unwithered, may gather blossoms there in mature age as fragrant as those that first appeared amidst the budding affections of the teens. Love, if real, is rooted in the eternities. There is no reason why a woman of forty should not be loveable and loved; so long as heart-bloom exists she cau-

not fail to be attractive. If the disk of human nature is but turned to the Sun of the Divine Love, winter will never desolate its surfaces. If we cherish beautiful souls the very senses will bask in their ripeness and mature to healthful and long continued perfection, unless indeed, as is sometimes the case, we bear in our bodies ancestral sins never in this life to be fully removed.

An old heart ages the person; a young heart makes even the blood-drops dance with more delightful motion. It is no treason to the memory of a first attachment for the widow or widower to wed again. If we have loved once and found a nature that answered all our better being, that hived itself within the faculties like a brood of golden bees within their summer palace, and then the dear one was called home before us, we shall be calmly patient; the better portion of the soul will have arisen to prepare,—who knows what blissful welcomes?

If the affection which consecrated itself in youthful marriage-love was one of simple, natural fondness, though pure and not without its especial sanction, we shall feel, when to ourselves again, a sense of freedom to form other, and, it may be, more perfect ties. Bleak and torpid natures may reason that God made the soul and Satan the senses, but there is a better doctrine: we are His who made and redeemed us, both in spirit and body.

If the love that seeks its consecration in marriage is never more than a growth of nature and time, it is honored too highly when dignified in art and poetry, and when we make high holiday in the heart to celebrate its entrance. If it is merely the outgrowth of human nature's most ephemeral and extrinsic elements, it is unworthy of the shrine reared for it in the sacred palaces of reason and imagination. But if it is a reality, pertaining to that within which is best and most lasting, its ardors can be experienced at any age.

This true, abiding love may come as the last, mature

flower of the summer, no less than as the most timid and tender nursling of the early spring. Society sneers, in its ill-natured way, at "old girls," but this betrays a bleak heart and bad taste. Matured maidens often make the very best of wives; beauty returns with a happy marriage; the incipient vinegar becomes honey again to sweeten the honest husband's cup. It is good for the aged heart, aged in years but not in feelings, to nurse its young romance. Perhaps the one who would have been lover and bridegroom is waiting to blend in the kindred of spirit where the just are as the angels of God in Heaven. When the pouting lip has lost its redness, and the rounded figure shrunken to mere outlines, like the waning crescent of the night, the ripeness and rosiness are gathered back into the soul,

"As if a rose should shut and be a bud again."

A soul-satisfying marriage, even here, may revive, in ampler beauty, the girlish promise; but, if not, still it is well. In that coming life where the real is the visible, the faithful, noble spirit shall clothe its apparent self with the living hues and the immortal charms.

"I am going to be young again," said Dr. Hartwell to me one day, "young in person as well as mind." As I glanced wonderingly at that venerable frame, unused then to such consoling thoughts, he added, "Behold how all things in nature renew their prime. The trees drop their old leaves for garments of youthful verdure. The world puts off her faded livery, and blushes round us with the returning season in bridal robes. Shall the spirit of man be the sole exception? When He who made us breathes upon the dust it wakes to joyous life, sparkles in its beauty and sings for gladness. When that Being breathes on man and he becomes immortal, shall not the joy within us become a mantle in which we shall worship, attired in endless youth, before His face? God's messengers, according

to His word, return or visit us from the coming life, complete in all their manhood. The human form is permanent, because fashioned in the Divine Image, and, though glorified, is unalterable. We have the warrant of faith for believing of the bright ones who have arisen, that they are not vacant abstractions, but living natures, intensely personal in all their attributes:

"If God has made this world so fair
Where sin and death abound,
How beautiful beyond compare
Must Paradise be found!"

After a few months of married life the visible beauty of countenance passes from the husband's sight, and, becoming accustomed to the graceful person, the charm vanishes. Once it was in the distance a miracle of Heaven's own creation, to which the eyes ever longingly turned in daylight or dream. The lover thought the fair one a supernatural grace till she became the domestic friend. The hand that sparkled afar as if it wore for jewels Arcturus and the Pleiades, ceases to be admired after the waning of the honeymoon, when it takes to spreading bread and butter, and wears only for ornament a plain golden ring. Courtships that linger pass from their first heyday and brightness often into clouded, sorrowful years. Yet if there is high purpose, true faith, and a sincere desire between the two to make duty paramount and to overcome self in living for others, a second beauty, which shall never wax old or perish, succeeds the first, which was but the morning redness melting from the skies.

Countenances change as we gradually win our way to the character concealed beneath their outlines. Mrs. Juliet forgets Mr. Romeo's silken moustache, flowing curls and all the bravery of attire and person; but still he looks dearer and nobler to the mild, matronly eye, waking at midnight, in the most prosaic of cotton night-caps, to hush

little Violetta, that the dear mother, tired of patient watching, may take the rest she so much needs. The beauty of the loving and self-sacrificing heart soon becomes the paramount attraction, and true husbands find their wives more comely and sweet perpetually, with every ripening of the trustful and quiet spirit. At last, when the two stand at the foot of the hill, and the long and useful pilgrimage is drawing to its close, sight becomes almost a perception of the soul, and the beauty of the heart mirrors itself before the waking as well as the sleeping vision.

Grandfather finds grandmother's lips as sweet as in the honeymoon. The aged pair enjoy as much the quiet evening walk together. They gaze upon the stars and think of the coming time when they may win their way "mixed soul and soul" forever beyond those blissful watchers. Grandfather thrills with the sacred romance of that new courtship on life's Saturday evening before the great Sabbath of immortality, with tender breathings of the heart and sunny hopes of prospective union, ardent as those which Charlie Bloomfield enjoys when Marian leans upon his arm and they walk beneath the flowering limes or listen to the nightingale. Love grows and becomes perfect through all the cycles of our endless being.

Two strangers made their appearance about this time in Riverside village. They are not new faces to us, the tall one being styled Mr. Joseph Chelmsford while his companion answers to the euphonious name of Benjamin Wiggins. "Having," as they say, "a little bit of money to invest, they are looking out for a public house with a good run of custom at the tap." Strolling about, in a manner not to attract attention, the pair may be seen toward dusk reconnoitering the Parsonage. Being convinced that they may do so without observation they enter the gate and ring the house bell, inquiring for the Rector, with whom they have particular business.

Following them into the study we take a brief notice of their interview. The spokesman is Cunning Joe and he informs Dr. Hartwell that they are legacy hunters, making it also a business to discover absconding debtors, ferret out concealed persons and look up lost or missing heirs. They have heard that a legacy of ten thousand pounds was bequeathed six years ago or more by the old Earl of Riverside for the finders of the daughter of his son. This being in the line of their profession they have called to make inquiries.

Dr. Hartwell replies to these interrogatives, that he is one of the executors under the will, that the legacy was bequeathed as they had been informed, but that as yet no parties had appeared to claim it. This calls out the reply from the spokesman, Cunning Joe, "The executors have some one abroad ferreting her out." Dr. Hartwell rejoins that Sergeant Parks of Middle Temple, London, has charge of all legal business pertaining to the matter and that if they desire legal information it will be necessary to call upon him; adding also that the legacy would be paid to whomsoever might be so fortunate as to discover the young lady who has been abducted, whether employed by the executors or not. At this Cunning Joe inquires "if one Benbow, whom he had seen in California, might not be abroad upon this undertaking? If so there had been a bit of disturbance and the man had lost his life, as was said, by foul play." This drew forth the response from the Rector that if they had anything to communicate concerning the death of the Forester he would be glad to hear it, as the surviving members of the family were parishioners of his own.

The rogue had the narrative at his tongue's end, and rejoined, that, hearing in San Francisco that an Englishman had been killed, on making some inquiries he had learned that the man had interchanged high words with one Chivers, who accused him of having stolen a bond for ten thou-

sand pounds, and other documents. He had also heard since that time that Chivers had been seen with a young girl answering to the age of the heiress, before he had ventured on the gold hunt and lost his life. Putting these things together, they had thought it possible, if this was the child spirited away from the family of Lord Devereux, that she might be found; and, being on their return to America, should be glad of any information by which they might be facilitated in the enterprise.

Dr. Hartwell, with cautious prudence, avoided any remark that might afford his visitants any new information, suspecting them to be other than they seemed. Finding that nothing could be extracted from his lips, after noting down the address of the Attorney of the estate in London, they left the Rectory, disappearing from the hamlet of Riverside on the ensuing day.

CHAPTER XXV.

SATAN'S MASTERPIECE.

The Rector of Richmanstown being summoned to London, as he avers, on business, we follow him, and here again discover the footsteps of Cunning Joe. Joining together, piece by piece, such scraps of information as they were possessed of, and adding to it such missing links in the chain of evidence as the Rector's valet was able to afford, the three arrived at conclusions not far from the truth. These were, that Charity Green was the missing heiress; that Chivers had spirited her away and concealed her in America, on condition of a bond for ten thousand pounds, to be paid on Dr. Bushwig's succession to the estate, with they knew not what considerations besides; that Benbow had gone abroad to discover, if possible, her fate, and for this purpose had followed Chivers to California; and that, finally, the young lady might be discovered, in all probability, in some situation where she had been secluded by the gipsy, prior to his departure for the Pacific coast.

The question to be decided by the trio was now whether they should attempt to recover the heiress and then sell their secret to the executors for the mere amount of the legacy, or if more might not be made of it by secreting her in some secure place, involving the Rector of Richmanstown as an accomplice in the affair, and then subsisting for life at his expense.

Their present consultation was for the purpose of arriving at a conclusion, and here cunning Joe proved him-

self worthy of the name. Handy Ben remarked that, in his opinion, it was best to take the ten thousand pounds and end the matter. If the girl was to be found, a month or two of search, with the clue in their possession, would place her in their hands, and they had simply to deliver her to the executors, and have three thousand guineas apiece for their share. He did not like the thought of hushing her, as had been hinted; not that he was a milksop, or objected to mauling a man in a tussle, but then, this child had never done them any harm.

The Rector's man was brief. What was a life more or less in the world? If she was put quietly out of the way Dr. Bushwig would ask no questions, pay ten thousand pounds on the nail, and perhaps do better than that.

Cunning Joe smoked, sipped at his punch, and listened to the others, drawing figures and making dots meanwhile on the table with a bit of chalk, remarking at last, "Mayhap we can have ten thousand pounds or so a piece without putting her out of the way," and now dropped out the infernal suggestion, whispered, doubtless, in his ear, by the enemy of souls, "I know the Devereux family; they grow up to be men and women at an early age; the lass will soon be a woman. If we can find her, and then quietly remove her away, we will take her to some ken in one of the great cities and draw lots for the part we are to play. Two of us shall be ruffians, and the third a gentleman, who comes to save her, in the nick of time. We will refuse to yield the lass, and draw our knives at him. Then he can play the nabob, say that he loves her at first sight, appeal to our generosity, and finally offer us a hundred pounds or so a piece. We will take the money as a blind, and have a parson at hand who shall marry the girl to him on the spot; glad enough to consent, from the fright that she is in. I know the laws over there. Such marriages are good enough. If we take her to New York there are plenty of

cheap parsons to tie the knot for a guinea and no questions asked. Then, pals, one of us is husband to a countess with fifteen thousand a year. If you like this we'll vow on skull, knife and cross bones, pirates oath, never to be broken, not to betray counsel, not to claim other lots than we draw, and not to flinch, come what may. The one that wins the girl shall keep her over the water till she is of age to make a bond good, and shall not produce her as heiress, till, in consideration of our having found and released her, she executes the papers for thirty thousand pounds a piece, to be paid as we decide, out of the rentals or ready money. We can get all this and keep old Bushwig in the dark, by offering to put the lass out of the way for as much as he agreed to give Chivers."

Farewell to scenes of crime and profligacy, where abandoned men, regardless of the great law of love, plot the ruin of innocence. Fly swiftly, wild thought, spread pinions light as those that bore dainty Ariel on his master's errands. Once more we find ourselves with Charity Green.

After the death of Neeshema the gentle quakeress took the orphan to her own home. The lily of the valley, that springs, unheeded, by some dimpled water fount, far from the trodden haunts of men, is not more beautiful in its secluded retreat than is the graceful girl, who emerges, in this rich, sunset light, from the shadows of the cool piazza. Ripening toward womanhood at an early age, already a nameless charm begins to melt from the dreamy eyes, to dimple about the innocent mouth, to mingle a sweet sadness with the bird-like voice.

The Indian woman was buried, as she desired, where many a white tablet, many a sunken head stone, eaten by time's tooth and overgrown upon the northerly side with the moss and lichen of a century, records the tale of humble hearts who rest beneath from all their mortal labors. Here the red and the white are equal, and the gray haired

patriarch and the tender infant repose upon the same untroubled couch. By night there are soft whisperings amidst the elms and lindens; by day the robin, the oriole and the brown thrush are tuneful in the branches, while, above the tree tops, the spire of the village church uplifts the sacred cross and points the road to immortality. What beating bosoms are still beneath these grassy coverlets. How unmeaning in this place seem all the distinctions of the world. The burial spot of a Christian people is always holy. Here one might rest the head at nightfall, with one of these green hillocks for a pillow, and dream of such unutterable things as Jacob saw, beholding the mystic ladder and its rings of light, and then the stately steppings of the angels. Rest in peace, poor, dusky form, inviolate and undisturbed. Rest, too, thou panting spirit, enfranchised from the dust!

But the three men whom we observe do not rest. They are late watchers and skulk in dark shadows, communicating to each other in the stealthy whisperings of guilt. The first speaker is one whom we have seen before in the study of Dr. Bushwig; it is the gentleman's gentleman; and the others, in spite of their disguises, are his associates in a fearful compact, Cunning Joe and Handy Ben. Evil fruit ripens rapidly. All summer long a murderer meditates his plot, while, in some distant field, the hempen plant whose stout fibres are to quiver and strain beneath the weight of the gasping wretch, turned from the dock and tossing wildly in the air beneath the gallows tree, are slowly turning from green to yellow, beneath the same unwearied sun, shining with equal ray upon the evil and the good. Spirit of John Chivers, foully moving from thy place of torment and unrest, wert thou in that sigh of the night-blast? "Some one spoke," said Tofton, "who was it?" "Not I," answered Handy Ben. Cunning Joe was too deep in meditation to make reply.

It seems sometimes as if the innocent and the unsuspecting are caused purposely to fall into the hands of the vile and cruel. A bad man schemes, and waits for years, perchance, to accomplish his purpose; when, lo! the victim is thrust into his way. But always God's Providences are vindicated in the end. Charity Green inherited from her mother, as we have observed, a faculty which is sometimes developed in highly-wrought organizations,—a dangerous gift in a bad world like this,—that of somnambulism. Now rising from her couch, while the constellations, dipping westward, tell the hour of midnight on the starry dial, clad in loose, flowing robes, still asleep as to the senses, but awake in the very breathings and meditations of the soul, she stands beside the grave of Neeshema.

A second sigh is borne upon the breeze. Is it the moaning wind? All is silent. The cattle sleep in dewy meadows by the river's brim, and the last tinkling bell shall move no more till morning. The gurgling of distant water through the meadows, inaudible by day, is heard by acute senses with a faint and intermittent sound. Pale sleep-walker, startle not these echoes,—hush thy very breath, or thou art lost!

Chelmsford, case-hardened in crime, often made it a boast that "he believed in neither God nor devil. When a man died, that was the end of him." The superstitious qualms and night-mare terrors, to say nothing of the sudden knife-thrusts of conscience, which other bad men had confessed, made no impression on those firm nerves. Not so with the other two.

"Come," muttered Handy Ben, "we are too near this bone house. Mayhap we have woke some of them. We know the girl is asleep at the teachers. Let's finish our talk as we move along." "Hush!" whispered Cunning Joe. All listened. Charity was singing in her sleep an old hymn that Neeshema had loved. Full of a plaintive,

unearthly tenderness, the sacred words came floating to the three, not one of them inaudible :

“There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

“Since first, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die ;

“And, when this feeble, stammering tongue
Lies in the silent grave,
Then, in a sweeter, nobler song,
I'll sing thy power to save.”


For a moment the listeners were spell-bound. He who inspired that lyric knows alone what memories were quickened by it. Handy Ben was first to speak, “Lads, that's warning. Blood will come of this undertaking.” Tofton shivered, his teeth chattered, a cold clammy sweat came out upon the forehead like that which forms its beads upon the temples of dying men. The trio had left their lodgings because walls had ears, and were in this secluded place for the purpose of planning the most feasible method of obtaining possession of the treasure of whom they were in search.

Again the mysterious music smote upon the sense, and now full of holy triumph. Drawn as by some irresistible charm, the confederates gained a knoll which overlooked the wall of the burial place, and there, visible in faint starlight, shone one so ethereal that she seemed almost to poise in air above a new made grave. The beamy radiance rested upon the face as if it were a halo, and the white robes glimmered like those of a seraphic being.

Chelmsford nudged the other two, with a "Hist! Blast your eyes, that's her now. She is a sleep walker. Chivers told me about this, and, when I said there was no such thing, but that it was all a hoax, he mentioned that he had a little girl with him who would rise from a sound slumber, walk about in moonlight, and see in the dark as plain as a young owl. Keep still and she is ours." With another muttered imprecation on his companions for their cowardice, he forced on each a copious draught from the brandy flask in his pocket. Five minutes later and, with feet and hands carefully pinioned, and a tight bandage over the mouth to prevent a sound from escaping her lips, the somnambulist was the captive of the guilty three.

In the morning Charity was missing and all search in vain. The arrangements of her kidnappers were made with the precision which characterizes adepts in crime. The circumstance excited but small remark, the gossips shaking their wise heads sagaciously and remarking to each other that she was a half breed Indian, who had quietly slipped away to her wild life. The gentle Quakeress found nothing removed from the apartment but a loose, white morning gown, even the light slippers remaining as they had been placed upon retiring for the night.

Within twenty-four hours an Englishman, by name Philip Bulwinkle, arrived at Proutville. Robbed upon the Isthmus of Panama and left there penniless, he had earned, by day-labor, a trifling sum of money; had secured a passage in a steamer to Havana; thence after recovering from a fever had arrived at a northern port; passed weeks in searching from place to place along the bays and inlets of Long Island, for a family named Buncle; learned that a girl placed under their charge by Chivers had left them; found at last the drunken son of Neeshema; was informed by him that his deceased mother had accompanied the heiress to a *village on the mainland*, and now arrived *a day too late*.



CHAPTER XXVI.

COUNTER-PLOT.

For six years the executors of the will of the Earl of Riverside had made every possible exertion to unravel the dark mystery of Rosa's fate. Chivers had so carefully guarded his secret that the detectives heretofore employed had been baffled to this point. Three experienced agents of the London Police were now sent abroad with instructions to spare no pains or expense for the recovery of the heiress.

The evidence adduced by Dr. Bushwig in proof of the identity of Rosa Devereux with the gipsy child whose death had taken place at Coddlington Green, submitted to counsel, had drawn forth the opinion that, unless some positive testimony could be brought forth, fixing a conspiracy on the Rector of Richmanstown and identifying the child abducted by Chivers from the care of Marian Deschamps with the heiress of the estate, the decision must be in favor of their opponent.

To obtain delay was now their object, still entertaining the faint hope that the orphan might yet be recovered. Acting in pursuance of the instructions of the will, they determined to avail themselves of such legal methods as were possible for the purpose of postponing the decision. At the June Assizes, when the suit was called, their counsel moved for a postponement of the case on the plea that witnesses of great importance were absent in America. Baron Grumble, the judge, over-ruling the motion, the trial pro-

ceeded. The magnitude of the case, and the interests involved, filled Richmanstown with a concourse of strangers, and, when the court was opened, a dense array of the beauty, fashion and distinction of the county thronged the place.

Sergeant Wildfire opened for his client, Dr. Bushwig. "It was a case of extraordinary simplicity. There were two parties, the heir in entail, who sought, by an appeal to law, to obtain possession of his family estate, and the executors of the late Earl, who, for some reason to him unknown, and acting in a most unwarrantable manner, had thrown every obstacle in the way. They were now here to obtain such a decision as would vindicate justice and teach those who had thus warred against its plain course such a lesson as might not be lost. His only regret was that two divines of the Establishment were arrayed in opposition to each other. One of them, his Honorable and Reverend client, was speedily, as was hinted, to be exalted to a bishopric. The other was an honest, well-meaning but obstinate country parson. He rejoiced to say that, throughout the whole course of this lamentable affair, Dr. Bushwig, for whom he appeared, had treated his enemies with Christian charity, but forbearance had its limit, and now mercy must give way to justice." Then in a masterly manner he brought forward his testimony, proving first that Dr. Bushwig was the legal heir in entail in default of Rosa Devereux, daughter of Robert Devereux, deceased. It now became necessary to establish the identity of Rosa Devereux with the child buried at Coddlington Green. The certificates already procured for the occasion, by Dr. Bumblefuz, were now adduced in evidence, and the confession of Chivers brought forth as corroborative testimony. The case rested here.

The counsel for the defence were unable to adduce any direct, admissible testimony to establish either that the confession of the gipsy was a fraud or that the heiress was

still in existence, the documents for which the Forester had risked and lost his life not being deemed by the astute and experienced barristers for the trustees either safe or sufficient. Holding that a conspiracy had been entered into for the abduction of the child, between the Rector and the accused criminal, and that the finding of the bond and the package of letters was strong presumptive evidence against him, it was deemed expedient to suppress all this at present, and to act as if utterly unable to offset the declaration in the plaintiff's behalf. Accordingly an exception was taken to the decision of the court, overruling the motion for delay; judgment being entered on the docket in favor of the plaintiff, who, flushed with victory, received the congratulations of his numerous friends. This triumph was fruitless of results for the present, as the executors retained possession, the case having to be re-argued in future on the appeal. It was hoped that by this course a year's delay might be obtained.

In the meanwhile, the detectives employed by the executors made little progress in their search, though furnished with such scraps of information as were selected from the letters sent home by the Forester. Baffled at the spot where the girl, spirited away by Chivers, had been placed in retirement, they could only ascertain, that, having absconded from this place of refuge, a female of the same age, and supposed to be the runaway, had been found drowned, shortly afterward, in a neighboring pond. All traces beyond this disappeared. Not the slightest indication could be found of her reëpearance in any of the haunts which Chivers had frequented, in the metropolis, not far distant.

It is truly said that water leaves no trail. Charity, on leaving the farm house of the Buncles, had fallen in with Neeshema, and crossed with her to the main shore, without passing through any of the hamlets on the Island. Seclu-

ded now in a New England village she was beyond the reach of their keen perceptions.

The detectives returned home, giving up the search as ineffectual. In the meanwhile the New World was enriched by the accession of two personages, both of whom we observed years ago on an English common in a gipsy tent, one rejoicing in the case which follows the setting of a broken limb, and the other, a tall, dark-skinned, ebon-haired woman, holding jubilee over his unexpected relief. The youth is the same reckless desperado that he was on the eve, when, repaying kindness with ingratitude, he unlocked the postern gate for the house-breakers at Wingate Hall. Clinging still to her son with the animal's blind fondness for its progeny, she has accompanied him to America, where he finds a precarious subsistence through his profession of a burglar, the dame in the meantime eking out a livelihood by fortune telling.

Peter Styles arrived at Proutville a day too late. Unlike the detectives, acting on one of Roger Benbow's sage maxims, he had ploughed with the heifer. A kind deed brought, as it often does, an unexpected recompense. The ill-natured, fretful woman in whose house Charity Green had once been domesticated, sat at the door smoking, in fisherman's style, and nursing an ailing child. The Bone-setter, extracted, with his old skill, a rusted fish-hook, the barb of which had become imbedded in the foot, threatening to produce lock-jaw, and then quieted the little fellow in a fatherly, old-fashioned way, having in it no motive but to relieve the suffering. Then, as he was about to leave the woman, she muttered, "If I had thought that her board would have been paid, I might have kept the girl. She must be of account. Some time ago we had three men here looking after her. They were about the neighborhood for a week. Then came a tall, thin chap, with keen eyes and a slouching gait, and, with him, a stout fellow, saying

that they had been sent by the man in California who left the child to look after her. The last I saw of them, the tall fellow said to the other, "All right, Ben." They had been out fishing with some chaps from the other side of the Sound, and were now in company with a half breed Indian, who takes more fish and drinks more rum than any on the bay.

Styles put his hand against the beating heart with a sudden motion. The good man was faint, nor yet recovered entirely from his Isthmus fever. The news was for the moment overpowering. He recognized, from the woman's description, two of the ruffians who had sought his life in the ravine where Benbow so opportunely had stood his friend. That they had, through the Indian, found some clue to Lord Robert's daughter, and that he must follow after, required but a moment's thought. Instantly pursuing the search after the half-breed, he found his way to the quiet home of the quaker instructress a day too late. Henceforth obliged to act with a double purpose, and first disguising himself against the vengeance of his enemies, with unwearied pertinacity he followed in their track, slow but sure. That the recent abductors were the accomplices of Chivers, that one of them had been his robber on the Isthmus, and that his next duty was, at any personal risk, to institute a search for them, seemed moving in his mind as if it were an inspiration from above.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE BARBECUE AT SMITHOPOLIS.

They had a barbecue at Smithopolis. The Honorable Azariah Chowder had been elected to Congress. Martin Prout, a scion of the illustrious family of the Prouts of Proutville, was his competitor. The Democracy had marshalled its legions. The shamrock had rallied to the rescue of the American eagle, and Azariah Chowder had triumphed over the dispirited and flying foe, leading on his valiant forces to the inspiring strains of Yankee Doodle and St. Patrick's Day in the Morning.

Smithopolis was a thriving village in the State of Illinois. Here our whilome friend, the ambassador, had become a great landholder, and the youngest son, Martin Prout, his representative. Martin was a buck. He drove fast horses; lived fast; talked fast; whittled fast. In all but politics, Jehu, the son of Nimshi, might have been his prototype. In politics he was, as the "Tocsin of Revolution" felicitously expressed, "Toiling like a snail behind the locomotive of Liberty, and seeking to arrest the march of progress by squirting tobacco juice upon the blazing prairie of the popular rights."

Martin had imported a colony of sturdy Germans to subdue and reclaim these rich lands, and was living in a prairie palace. Far as the eye could reach the billows of vegetation rolled like the undulations of some inland sea. There thousands of acres, never before broken by a plough, without a dividing enclosure, during the Summer had borne

wheat tall as a man's head or gladdened the eye with the dark, green foliage and nodding plumes of the Indian corn. In the Autumn the rustling grass was alive with untold myriads of prairie fowl, and in the Spring the sky dark with moving myriads of wild pigeons, sometimes for hours obscuring the sun. Here Plenty reigned. Ceres fed the hungry from her golden horn.

Over these broad domains of the Prouts lay a mellow haze. It was the autumn. The huge harvest had been reaped. The homesteads, dotting the prairie at intervals, with young orchards and plantations of locusts around them, resembled Egyptian villages in the overflowing of the Nile. New Englanders as well as Old Englanders were gathered on that mellow soil. The schoolhouse from Connecticut and the pot house from Tipperary both expanded and grew portly, as became thriving emigrants. Father Dennis Toole journeys from station to station, confirming Patrick and Shelah in the "ould faith," christening the rising generation of O'Mulligans and O'Flaherties, and collecting funds for the cathedral which is soon to rise at Smithopolis, where a capacious wooden chapel already stands. In timber islands of these vast, natural meadows, sturdy lads and jocund lasses are startling the deer from their coverts with merry laughter, or despoiling the brave old hickories and chestnuts of their treasures. The gray squirrel, with a nut in either pouch of his round cheeks, hides his glossy fur within some hollow oak, and the last flowers of the season are yielding their honeyed spoil to the wild bee, who finds a hive in some large sycamore, far above the reach of winter bears, who seek to luxuriate on such luscious spoil. The conies scud to their forms frightened by their own timid steps on the dry leaves. The fallen foliage yields to the foot that presses it a delicious odor, and the trees stand like monarchs for some coronation, in foliage vivid as the sunrise, and changeful as the northern lights.

Songs that once woke the Rhine echoes, or that melted from the lips of maidens of the Emerald Isle beside the lakes of Killarney,—songs that the brave Ayrshire ploughman warbled as the bright share turned the daisy or as his heart grew tender at Highland Mary's grave,—songs in every language of old Europe rose in that mild Autumn air. Deacon Giles tuned his pitch-pipe and quavered out Old Hundred in a shrill treble, while good aunt Keziah joined in with a strain that still had something of the girlish melody. Maternal Autumn, walking from homestead to homestead, saw that plenty ruled in all.

Happy courting scenes might be witnessed beneath those empurpled and glowing forest trees; in copses fragrant with late blown flowers; in husking parties where gay boys and girls stripped the shrivelled coverings of the golden corn-ears and when the bashful gallant who found the red ear in his basket had right prescriptive to a kiss from the ripe lips of the best loved girl.

There were courtings in Gaelic, where Robin woos Jeanie with a verse from the lover-poet upon his lips, when they break the silver sixpence between them, and promise troth and faithfulness with their hands upon the old book that has made Scotland all that she is in noblest excellence. There were courtings in fragments of the Erse tongue. Young Patrick has kissed Norah, stealing slyly behind her as she turns the spinning wheel or comes home at sunset bearing on her head the foaming milk pail. There were courtings in sonorous German, language of heroes, in which Jean Paul melted his heart to words, and Schiller sang; courtings in German without fear that Kaiser or Elector may draft Max into the army, or interdict the glad festivities of Hymen till years of thrift have filled the stocking with florins and thalers. There were courtings in Welch, where John Jones or Thomas Thomas propounds the all-important query to Morgan Morgans' daughter Winifred, or Hugh

Hughes' neice, and families older than Tudor or Plantagenet take root and flourish in a land that shall be greater than Rome. There were courtings in all languages, and, in prospect, new books, new gowns, brave attire for the person, and sumptuous viands for the mind, as the harvest brings back its rich return. And Bumblefuz! prophet of poor rates and starvation, eloquent panegyrist of turnips and water gruel, stern opponent of injudicious matrimony and a redundant population, stand with me amidst these hospitable homesteads, gaze on these mountains of corn, waiting to be eaten, these millions of acres asking to be tilled, recant thy heresies, and cry "Let Hymen flourish!"

The barbecue at Smithopolis was a grand affair. Election being over, victors and vanquished joined hands in a merry festival. There was an ox roasted whole and acres of broiled chicken. Donald revived his memories of haggis and oatmeal bannock. Griffith Griffiths invited the Cymry to partake of Welsh curds. For the Scandinavian there was sour crout; for the Briton ancestral plum pudding and roast beef. Sancho Panza, had he been there, would have scorned the dippings of Camacho's pots, and good Don Quixote have melted before the charms of a thousand Dulcineas.

Martin Prout, who is a gallant bachelor, consoles himself for his defeat in the field of politics by many a wistful glance into King Hymen's realms. All Smithopolis keeps holiday; and here, last place in the world for such a rencontre, gazing with open-eyed reverence at the Honorable Azariah Chowder, shines the rosy face and peers the cunning eye of the Past High Mitre, Epaphroditus Wagge. The civilian has emigrated and Richmanstown-cum-Slop-perry shakes its sides with irrepressible laughter no more.

Mabel Henly was a poetess and wrote "such sweet verses" for the magazines. The lady was a novelist also, and indited stories which boarding school misses pronounce "charming" and "divine." Authoress of the "Captive Tree

Toad of Swallow Vale" and other exquisite metrical compositions, which are destined in the opinion of the editor of the Smithopolis "Tocsin of Revolution" to hand down her name to the remotest posterity, her blue eyes are turned up in a perpetual extacy and the nose turns after them, wondering what the eyes are staring at in that unaccountable manner. She indulges in romantic dreams,—just melting into the thirties,—of being courted by some foreign nobleman in disguise, who goes shooting in kid gloves, does up his hair every night in curl papers and says "waitah" and "foine wethah." He is to love her for herself alone, and bear her in triumph to grace the court of England's queen, where she is to be called "the burning Sappho of the modern Parnassus." This lady takes a lunch of sandwich and roast chicken in the pantry, and dines afterward on a little crust of a French roll and a few ripe strawberries in their season. She receives her guests attired in the artless simplicity of a lover of the Muses, who is courted in her dreams by Apollo, and affects entire unconsciousness of the tender emotions inspired in the bosom of young lawyer Jenkins by her dimpled shoulders and lily white hand. She lisps prettily, "No I thank you," when invited to partake, by this enamored attorney, of a little lady-cake, and sups heartily, after the fatigues of the evening, when the doors of the mansion are closed against the last of her admirers, upon broiled ham and pickles. Mabel is, as she declares in a letter to a female correspondent, "A fond girl; gifted, alas! with a soul too ethereal to endure the crushing heart-breaks which afflict high natures;" averring moreover that "She has learned in suffering what she breathes in song." And hark! suffering has inspired her muse, and, while admiring Smithopolis is hushed in silence by the spell of genius and beauty, this favorite of the muse deigns to honor the barbecue by reciting an original ode, in commemoration of the rescue of *the ship of state* from the quicksands of destruction by the

election of the Honorable Azariah Chowder to the Congress of the United States.

O D E.

Not that I honor Prout the less, but mighty Chowder more,
I sweep my harp of burning strings, and, while the billows roar,
Rehearse how Chowder won the fight, and sits at Freedom's gate,
Bearing upon his laureled brow the bulwarks of the state.

O, Chowder has an arm to smite ; a tender heart to feel.
High as Columbia's eagle soars, far as her thunders peal,
Invincible to British gold, fearless of war's alarms,
He stands, like Roman Hercules, and cries, "to arms! to arms!"

The ship of state was drifting on to be a bleeding wreck,
When Chowder heard the tempests rage, and shouted, from the deck,
"Ho! shipmates! man the flying jib, and double shot her guns!
Come show your mothers that they all had heroes for their sons."

They heard! they rallied! Dark uprose the waves to overwhelm,
But turned and fled, when Chowder stood, triumphant at the helm:
Then write your Chowder's glorious name amidst the stripes and
stars;

Our Freedom's war-horse let him ride like Bonaparte or Mars.

Wagge listened ; Smithopolis applauded ; Chowder blushed.
They discussed the ox roasted whole. Afterward they discussed the affairs of the nation, which latter portion of the repast being rather dry, they drank the health of the American eagle, which majestic bird, had he been present, would doubtless, as the Past High Mitre observed to himself, "have thrice flapped his majestic pinions triumphantly and shouted 'hurrah!'"

There was a soiree that evening, where the elite of Smithopolis and vicinity refreshed themselves about midnight with boned turkey, cold tongue, grouse from the prairies, potted lobster, and pickled oysters from the classic shores of Rappahannock and Appomattox. There were cus-

ards and compliments, floating islands and flattery, bonbons and blushes, ices that they took cold on account of the heat, and various high-flavored drinks, which were imbibed warm to counteract the effect of the ices. Two illustrious foreigners honored the drawing-rooms with their presence, one of them, Dr. Wagge, a civilian of eminence, another, "Col. Tofton of the British army," as he is called.

When this prairie Sappho beholds the latter, she is sure that he is a nobleman in disguise. Gentility is written in every graceful curve of the moustache; gentility exhales from the ambrosial curls; gentility walks the floor in patent leathers; gentility ogles through black eyes that rest approvingly upon the dimpled shoulders; gentility says "waitah" through full lips that part to display the whitest of ivories; gentility finally presses daintily her white hand through the most irreproachable of kid gloves. Gentility condescends to admire the "pwoetry." Wagge is eclipsed by this ornate specimen of his native isle. Had Roger Benbow been there he would have looked at the foxes head upon his walking-stick and said "mum;" but Wagge was only Wagge, he was not the Forester. The glance of positive admiration which he had bestowed upon the Honorable Azariah Chowder, the smile of comparative admiration which he had set apart for the triumphant eagle with his majestic pinions, both were superceded by the look of superlative admiration bestowed upon this foreign nobleman in disguise. When asked if he had ever met the guest of the evening, Col. Tofton, abroad, he answered that "He had a vague recollection of having seen him, mingling somewhere with the flower of the aristocracy, but, being himself a retired man of science, he had not the *entre* to the exclusive court circles." This remark is made a little loudly, the distinguished stranger being observed to smile. The fair Sappho, by this time leaning admiringly upon her arm, enquired *sotto-voce* of her cavalier if he had seen

Dr. Wagge in the Old World? He replied "Wagge! Ah, Wagge! fellah ovah there? Can't say, weally, that I evah have had the honnah. He has a very unquommon name." Wagge knew him, nevertheless.

Colonel Tofton mailed, the next day, two letters, one to Madame Lucretia Lorne, Charleston, South Carolina; the other to the Reverend and Honorable Alphonso Bushwig, Richmanstown, England. Men of science are cosmopolitan. Dr. Wagge fraternised with Dr. Penrose, who, in a corner of his medical office, sacredly set apart from leeches and gallipots, transacted the business of a deputy post-master. Wagge was in, accidentally, when his brother professional was sorting and preparing letters for the mail. Penrose turned to him with the remark, "Doctor, by the way, this Col. Tofton corresponds with distinguished European gentlemen, as I should infer;" saying this while he stamped and post-marked the letter to the Honorable and Reverend Alphonso. "He seems to have traveled extensively," carefully arranging at the same time the missive to the female correspondent. The civilian admired the Colonel's coat of arms, with the griffin rampant displayed upon the ample seal. Dr. Penrose also glanced at the escutcheon, stopping for a moment to contemplate the device, Wagge walking to the desk the next instant and noting down the name of Madame Lucretia Lorne, Charleston, South Carolina.

On following the letters to their destination, we may discover that Col Tofton writes to Dr. Bushwig in manner like this: "The two men whom you instructed me to follow are still employed, ostensibly in trifles connected with their profession, but carefully picking up bits of information about some parties of whom they are in search. They have employed me to assist them, offering a third of the anticipated booty. I have succeeded in putting them on a false scent. Have no fear; all is well. There is a strongly-marked clue which I have as yet succeeded in keeping from

them. The girl is alive, in the hands of a woman of the town, who is bringing her up to serve eventually as a decoy. What shall I do?"

The style of the letter to the lady is somewhat different: "Let no one see the girl. I have deposited the sum agreed upon in the bank of South Carolina. On the day of my marriage to her I will check it over to you. Gratify her in every whim, but keep the bird close. Recollect your oath. The other gentlemen will be present at the date agreed upon. In the meantime they are both in your city, or its vicinity."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE HARPY'S DEN.

St. Michael's bells were tolling out the Christmas chimes. Flags adorned the shipping in Charleston harbor. The streets were filled with gaily-dressed colored people. Little chips of many an old ebony block, whose great grandfathers had maddened themselves with palm wine, and offered up their bloody worship before Mumbo Jumbo, with hideous outcries, upon the Guinea Coast, were eyeing mightily the good cheer, borne home by sable Dinahs, in great baskets upon their heads, and patting their round little stomachs in complacent expectation. Respectable colored butlers, attired in gentlemanly black, and carrying gold seals at their fobs, were making purchases in the markets for the households of their respective masters.

Huguenot families, whose forefathers had followed the white plume of Henry of Navarre at Ivry, expatriated to these shores at the revocation of the edict of Nantes, had here grafted the French lily on the English rose, and, intermarried among the scions of many a proud old stock of Puritan and Cavalier origin, were blossoming anew in gallant sons and fair daughters, at home alike in boudoir and on the battle field, in stately hospitality to the rich and gracious giving to the poor.

Christmas is the negroes' holiday. From the Virginia capes to where the turbid Rio Grande mingles its waters with the Mexican Gulf, the black race of the New World rests within the shadow of the manger, in which the sacred

child, heir of all earth's royalties, found his first, rude shelter. On Christmas day the slave upon the plantation is made glad with annual doles of clothing and with generous rations of better cheer. Snowy napery is spread in the cabins, and viands smoke upon the board that would do no discredit to baronial tables in the motherland. Field hands spend the week in merry goings from plantation to plantation, in hospitable visits made and received.

Old family carriages are seen, driving through winding lanes, beneath huge oaks, here gay with the misletoe, there drooping to the very ground in long wreaths of parasitical moss. Winter gardens are yet fragrant with newly blossomed roses, blooming in the open air. Two months later and the hedges by the wayside will display the pendant flowers of the yellow jasmine, shining in floral constellations with their stars of delicate gold. Those brown birds among the reeds are Ortolans; they call them rice birds here. The choicest of water fowl dive and swim in creeks that open from the sea.

For thousands of miles there is one universal tuning of banjoes and scraping of violins. The simple and inoffensive African race, children of the hour, yield readily to the spell of music; blessed spell, not without its solace to the most uncultivated ear. It takes but little to make poor men happy. Living near to nature we require less of artificial stimulus. He enjoys the most who is content with simple pleasures. The poet drinks more exhilaration, standing beneath the pine, and inhaling her spicy odors, than Parisian gourmands or East India nabobs are ever able to find in flasks of costliest vintage, or from dreamy opium smoked from the narghile or hookah, while dancing girls awake the echoes of the Harem with their twinkling feet to please its master's dull, capricious eye.

The Charleston negroes keep their holiday in a grand camp meeting in the woods. Here, amidst tall pines that

rise like columns in a native temple, with many a rude rite and solemn song, they celebrate the hour made sacred forever by the rising of the Star of Bethlehem. A circular space is opened in the centre of the grove, and at night the resinous pine knots, burning high in air from stands against the pillars, invest the spot with a sad, preternatural light. A thousand voices sing together the solemn strains of the hundredth psalm, with a sound, that heard afar, is like the swelling of the sea. Tents of every form, prosaic enough by day, but at night, in the flickering radiance, mystic as the one of old where the Patriarch wrestled with the Invisible are scattered amidst the forest. A rude platform is erected for the clergymen, and there are gathered around perhaps two thousand, seated on settles made of the trunks of the rough hewn pines. A thousand more stand in groups, in every attitude.

Here, wrinkled and grizzled, is one who remembers how he heard the fetish men make jargon around their hideous images on the Slave Coast; and beside in its mother's arms, his great grandchild, born within the Sabbath chiming of St. Michael's bells. Here the house servant from the city is visible, arrayed in silk the gift of her young mistress, and wearing French gloves and a Parisian hat. By her side stands a sable sister from the plantation, whose strong, hard hands are accustomed to holding the light plough or wielding the heavy hoe. Here the gentleman's body servant, an exquisite of the first water, leans jauntily upon his cane, twirling the tassel in the gloved hand; he sports a gold watch chain at the satin vest, and holds the glossy beaver before his eyes, as he has observed the man of fashion at a more pretending service. There black Sambo sits upon the ground, his head buried between the knees, and the old, worn frame, that holds a radiant son of God, who by and by shall walk on the sea of glass and worship before the throne, shivers with emotion as the soul drinks in a cer-

tain nameless influence, that passes like the summer wind, so that its going and its coming are lost in mystery.

Talk of the prosaic nineteenth century! We should see more than a Greek Iliad if we had "the vision and the faculty divine" that lit old Homer's sightless eyeballs. The negro character is a mystery; on its earthly side it touches the puerile and buries itself in fond and foolish trifles; on its heavenly side it quivers to the breath of the Infinite and responds all unconsciously, as when the pine tree sings. There is no race so made to be governed through religion. Dear to the slave, who recites the wondrous story in his rude hut, or listens with awe-stricken reverence while some dear child of the master's family reads of Him who came to save His people, dear to the slave is the book that God has given. He clothes each verbal statement, through that conceptive faculty which we call imagination, with forms of majesty and hues of life. His soul seems all an eyeball, where abstract truths reflect themselves in endless pictures. He says "I see" for "I think." If only alive in the mere instincts he grovels; but, if kindled by the Spirit of Him who came in the shinings of the Bethlehem Star to earth, he eclipses many a world-famed student in the intensity and the persistence of faith. He cannot conceive of God as an impersonality, but must worship the Spirit, clothed with human outlines, and streaming at every pore with infinite benevolence. The negro seldom becomes a disciple of those forms of Christian faith in which truth is presented chiefly through the understanding. Lyrical by nature, he goes right or wrong as impelled by means of the heart. These dusky children dwell on the feminine side of the planet,—have the woman's fondness for the beautiful and the same capacity of being immensely exalted or proportionately debased through the affectional life.

Observe the African at a frolic and he revels in a mirthfulness that has no bounds. Notice him at a night meeting

in the woods like this, and he rises often to an altitude of faith that would soar and sing amidst the world's burning.

Here let us pause and listen for a moment. There are two speakers on the stand. The first is a Charleston Divine, and he has preached a sermon highly elaborated and not without its use to minds of larger capacity and better training. Now the seats, half emptied before, begin to fill. As the preacher who is to follow him rises, a breathless hush pervades the sable multitude. Few would notice that he is blind, a favorite among men of brilliant culture, a lecturer of no common power, before refined and critical audiences,—when wrestling with a sacred theme, forgetful of human plaudits, he can be truly great. Sweet and tender, when moved upon by that influence which no divine should speak without, he then seems to have inherited some apostolic gift, and forgets the loss of outward vision in that burst of glory which deluges with sevenfold light those faculties that shall think, those powers which shall endure forever.

As the text is read, not from printed page, but from memory's invisible tablet, we perceive that it relates to the birth of that Desire of all the nations, whose coming Aldebaran watched for, and whom Orion and Canopus saw.

It is the test of eloquence that it touches the hearts of the lowly, and brings down highest themes to simplest natures. The orator felt, in his blindness, amidst those simple ones of the great Master's flock, what, perhaps, the watching angels saw, that whoever would make a triumphal entrance into the doors of those souls, must come as became their condition, meek and lowly, riding upon an ass and the foal of an ass. Disciple of Wesley, he was inspired for the occasion with all Wesley's fire. He spake of HIM who came. At first the words were on so low a key that a deep silence came upon the congregation. Something in the very cadence seemed to harmonize with the mournful

murmur of the pines, the purity and silence of the stars, the deep, unspoken hopings and strivings of their hearts. The voice slightly rose, so that all could hear the Preacher, as he told of who He was, where He came from, what glory He left, what humiliation He took on, what words He spake, what miracles He did, what agonies He suffered, and what death He died. And now the obscure eyes seemed to brighten in their sockets, the face shone angelic in the lustre of its enkindling affections, while the soft voice told of how He rose, and re-appeared, and triumphed, and ascended where He was before. Then unutterable tenderness seemed to melt the language into a rain of melody, declaring the wonders of His love, firm as earth, durable as heaven, all-pervading as the air; leaving no heart untouched, no soul unvisited. Then he told them that this All-radiant Stranger was no stranger, but a friend, that night present with them, all invisible as the wind was, all-inaudible as the stars were yet with a great light beyond the stars, and a still voice nearer than the wind. He showed what that light revealed and prophesied, and what that still voice even then was whispering; how that voice said to sinning man a woman, 'Come to me, and I will take away your sins; I will heal and purify you;—how it said to hardened and obdurate scoffers, 'I died to save you; I rose to save you; I intercede and plead to save you. Who of you would shut a poorer neighbor coming at night to ask relief from suffering? Why then bar your door against Me? I bring with life, eternal life. He spoke of the comfort of voice to the afflicted, to the hopeless, to the dying then, leaving the voice, seemed to beckon to the living that it might come visibly and rest upon their souls sublimely as in a vision that wondrous Hereafter unrolling from those pictured words; and then the words closed, while hundreds fell upon their knees and so uttered inarticulate prayers, that He whom they heard in

and felt in the glory might own them for His children, lead them through this world, and welcome them in the next.

There were two who heard that sermon, Cunning Joe and Handy Ben, and, after it was over, they walked apart beneath the pines, sauntering gradually toward the rail-road depot, that they might be in time for the next train. Joe said "The Parsons are our best friends. They are better than star actors. One old planter came to see the darkies at their frolic and I saw him. I wonder what there is in this pocket book? It stands out like his old, jolly corporation? It is a pity that fellow didn't go on the stage. If he was an Old Bailey lawyer he would make out any of us as innocent as the babes in the wood and save many a neck from hemp seed. If I was his brother I'd advise him to make these talents pay. He is a trump. My eyes! wouldn't he call down the house in Othello or any of those hifalutin characters. I'd go ten miles to see him, without any hope of pocket-books. What did you get."

Handy Ben looked crest-fallen, "I took an old boy's ticker in the beginning, but afterward I thought I was with them chaps he talked about; I wonder if any of that lingo's true." Cunning Joe looked his companion full in the face, as he never dared to gaze at an honest man, and made reply, "Ben you are soft; I'll warrant you by this time the parson is refreshing himself after spouting; taking a little cold turkey and champagne, and listening to those planter's daughters that looked so sweet upon him, while they honey fuggle him just as he honey fuggled you. You had better turn Methody yourself, take back that old boy's ticker, fall down upon your knees, with a fat wench on one side and a greasy old buck of a field hand on the other, and get religion. There will be one less to divide with when we come to settle about the gal." Handy Ben swore a deep oath. The soft spot that Cunning Joe spoke about hardened from that night.

Where was Charity Green? While once more the star of eighteen centuries arose above the dark world, where was Charity Green? Where? We shall soon see. Seven years ago this Christmas night, a little voice was heard wailing from the winnowing snow and melting into the wild blast across the seas. To-night a more terrific storm is whirling round her. It is sin's carnival. Will she pass unscathed through blasts that blow from Hades? Satan's drudges work hard. There is a voice within them that says, "On faster! on faster!"—that gives them no rest. We have to deal with no common character in Madame Lucretia Lorne.

Charity Green was kept close prisoner in this woman's house. It was an old, straggling edifice of great extent, parts having been erected before the Revolution, and flanked on either side by high, brick dwellings of modern build. In the rear flourished the remains of an ancient garden, enclosed within a massive wall, and from without inaccessible. A fierce dog, chained, kept guard here in the dark hours,—one of the species originally brought to the New World by its Spanish discoverers for the purpose of hunting Indians and negroes,—and was fed daily upon rations of bloody flesh for the purpose of maintaining his ferocity. All persons having access to the premises were cautioned against coming within the reach of his fangs. The mistress of the house suffered no person to feed the animal, to approach his kennel, or to unloose him at night, but herself; nor would he allow even the old servants, there for years, to re-fasten him when at large.

The lower windows of the house, looking upon the street, were secured by iron stanchions and thick oaken blinds. There was a double door, which afforded the only means of entrance to or egress from the edifice. A black porter kept watch between the two, a fixture of the place, grown gray in the service of its inmates.

The suite of drawing rooms was upon the second floor. Here, attired in costliest brocades, or airy robes of lighter material, and versed in all the fascinations of their evil trade, Madame Lorne kept her decoys. It was a rule of the house that they should be replaced by fresh faces every six months, except in unusual instances. Here, upon carpets unrolled through the apartments like a bed of glowing, gorgeous flowers, and soft to the tread as the thick moss that gathers upon fallen pine trees in the northern woods, the most extravagant and luxurious furniture of New York and Paris was profusely displayed. The paintings, which decorated the walls, were all of the modern French school, and calculated by their seductive charm of subject, color and outline to pamper the passions without offending the cultivated taste. A harp and piano of finest tone and quality afforded materials for music. So spreads at full length, amidst Brazilian forests, the great serpent of the Amazon, his glittering scales of burnished gold intermingled with others hued with opal, and rayed with amethyst and sapphire; and, when he moves, all brilliant in his coat of many colors, it is as if a rainbow had been dropt from heaven. The reptile approaches the heedless traveler, who, inhaling the musky odor, sinks enervated to rest upon that fragrant turf. He fascinates before he slays. The sleeper wakes from some soothing dream crushed in the folds of the Anaconda, each bone starting from its socket, and the glittering monster becomes his crawling, living grave.

The mistress of this establishment prided herself upon its order and decorum. Rioting was never known within its precincts. Opulent merchants, wealthy planters, civil dignitaries, strangers of family and distinction, were among its not unfrequent guests. Her residence was known by gay men of both hemispheres. Obsequious servants in livery handed refreshments on silver salvers and with gloved hands. Her ladies were accomplished in music and

the languages. She aped the style of the Regency or the after time of Louis XV. Her private suppers were spoken of as exquisite, the wines excellent, the viands of the finest quality. The lady maintained discipline with the rigor of a chief of police, and required obedience on the instant to her slightest word from every inmate. Her friends were received with the etiquette which belongs to the highest social circles. Great merchants spoke of Madame as setting a most commendable example to the sisterhood, and elderly men of note and eminence, who advised their gay young friends against dissipation, added, in a parenthesis, that if they would sow wild oats, they had better obtain an introduction to Madame Lorne.

Yet none would have thought, from a superficial glance, that crime had ripened to such rank fruits. She possessed in perfection what may be called the double nature. Trained in dissimulation she had learned to believe, with Talleyrand, that language is given to us for the purpose of concealing our thoughts. Her art extended to the control, not alone of language, but of the cadences of the voice. Those who knew her best had learned that Madame was most to be feared when that voice was dropped almost to an infantile gentleness. Sons and daughters called her mother,—the sons at a strict Jesuit College abroad, the daughters at a French Convent, kept in entire ignorance of the sources of her wealth. Loving them with an affection which was simply an extension of selfishness, her sole endeavor was to place them in society. No considerations of love or pity ever stood between her and an object. Steeped as to the intellect in fatalism, she adopted the doctrine that man originated in nature, that vice is but the consequence of his natural condition, and that, if there is any future life, the faculties there unfold spontaneously from state to state of refined intelligence. In her creed the passions were divine. The bold, bad woman had outgrown conscience

and looked upon the qualms of her youth as but the results of hereditary superstition. It was the boast of this dangerous creature, that she had maintained her own character amidst all circumstances. "It was," as she argued, "no ill life. She found men and women following the bent of their inclinations, and did not lead them astray. It was far better, since these misdirections must exist, that they should be made safe, respectable and orderly."

Oh, miserable sophistry! It is not the vice that curses in its drunken rage and makes language foul to the passer-by,—it is not the vice that turns its head back from the threshold of perdition, and, with Tophet's door ajar, beckons to the gay and giddy to gather that pollution and to perish in that flame,—it is not this vice, which infatuates the young and enslaves the old, ruins the unsuspecting youth, and plunges families into infamy, and murders souls who else might have lived forever. The sin that does this pleads its extenuation from lips and with fallacies like those of Madame Lorne.

To be allied with desperate characters of the other sex is an inevitable necessity growing out of a life like this. Mesh by mesh the toils close round them. The vices keep company; when one is present none of the others are far away. Over both hemispheres extends a society of fast men. The gambler, the libertine, the titled roué, the professional jockey compose its members. It sinks down from aristocratic elegance till its lowest extremities bound the borders of ruffianism and do dark deeds for gold, as many of its more select and refined proficient plan dark deeds for passion or revenge. There are among its adepts signs and passwords, oaths and tokens, the existence of which is concealed from its mere novices. Often the gentleman and the gentleman's gentleman change characters in its conclaves.—Ladies like Madame Lorne find it for their interest and safety to respect and own its power. Introduced as Col. Tofton,

a man of courage and honor, a professional gambler from abroad, who had a refractory ward to be kept secret for a year or two,—the lady made no difficulty about undertaking the charge. Mr. Joseph Chelmsford, also a sporting gentleman, armed with politely worded missives from others of this wide spread fraternity, was welcomed as Col. Tofton's confidential friend.

Human nature cannot always act a part. The exquisite repose of manner, the daintily phrased and delicate compliments with which Madame Lorne received her distinguished guests, gave place, when with these bad men, to a broader tone and a bolder speech; she felt it a relief to air the pent up devil in the heart. Having taken the oath of this fraternity, administered by Cunning Joe, to keep the girl secluded from all the mysteries of her mansion, unseen by any of its guests, Col. Tofton then departed upon his Western tour, Cunning Joe and Handy Ben by turns exercising *surveillance* over the girl, it being a part of the compact that she was to produce her at specified times that the two gentlemen might be satisfied that the ward was still under her custody. It was understood that the young lady had been, by the terms of her father's will, affianced to the Colonel and that family interests made a marriage inevitable. It was also fixed that the ceremony was to be performed when she should have arrived at the age of fifteen years.

The rear building of this domicil was of more recent construction than the principal portion of the edifice. It is necessary to fix in the mind the plan of its apartments. Cut off by party walls from the main structure it consisted of two rooms level with the street, and used as larder and wine cellar. The second floor was devoted especially to Madame,—the principal apartment being a luxurious boudoir, who there received such as she deigned to favor with a *tete-a-tete*. Lighted solely by a dim lamp, shedding its sub-

dued beams through a vase of rosy, oriental alabaster, the lady's own dormitory opened out of this. Two rooms above, of a similar construction but finished with neatness and simplicity, were assigned to the exclusive use of the Colonel's ward. A private staircase, with spring doors at each landing, was the only means by which the habitants of this wing of the edifice could enter or go forth. These doors opened with keys of which there were two; one never left the possession of Madame, the other was retained by her only trusted servant, a quadroon slave. On the second floor a balcony, enclosed by some light protection from the weather, served as a conservatory of flowers. The narrow windows on the third flight, which opened upon this, were shaded from the sun by a dark awning, projecting from the house, and furnished with a canvass extension, which, drooping as low as the window sill, secluded the inmates of the room from observation from any neighboring roof. The windows themselves were guarded by iron bars let into the brick work and there secured.

The harpy received the stolen heiress, who, conducted on board the steamer at New York as an invalid under the influence of stupefying drugs, was unaware even of the part of the world in which reason resumed its sway. The cloud had burst, and, in the fierce embrace of the whirlwind, she had been spirited where no voice could answer. Borne to the sunny South, a frightened, helpless girl, she woke from the sick bed, for many days nursed there by the quadroon, with clearer perceptions, and with a deeper heart to thrill with womanly emotions. Her childish days were over. They give her books; the early romances of Bulwer, highly colored fictions of Balzac, Dumas and Eugene Sue, all new to her young mind, and opening a world of subtle but impure sentiment before unknown. In that Armida's palace no enchantment was left without its trial. For the first time she enjoyed the flavors of Parisian gastronomy.

Madame's *cuisinier* having his faith too, an ancient one, that the seat of the soul was in the stomach, spared no pains to delight the palate and tempt the appetite. They tried to give her wine, but the shrinking invalid cried continually for water, and closed her teeth firmly when the glass was put to her lips. The quadroon, playing her part well in this sad tragedy, informed the young lady that a benevolent gentleman, Col. Tofton by name, returning from California, had rescued her from two ruffianly abductors; and that hearing her, while delirious, pronounce the name of Chivers, and call him uncle, she had been recognized as the niece of a deceased friend. Her kind guardian being now absent for a time, Madame Lorne, an excellent lady, had generously taken her in charge, assigning these secluded apartments for the purpose of preventing the ruffians, who were supposed to be still in the vicinity, from making another effort at spiriting her away.

The tall and slender girl became more graceful and charming with returning health. The slightest possible appearance of color began to tint the pale cheeks, while the eyes, of softest sapphire, lit still with the unearthly radiance of former days, grew soft and bashful. Attired with exquisite taste, and supplied with a wardrobe to which, before, she had never been accustomed, none would have recognised, in the beautiful young lady, the school girl of Proutville, or the house mate of Neeshema. Day by day that soft and pensive beauty became more fascinating, while the cheeks dimpled and the lips ripened to a full carnation.

The soul had matured its charms more rapidly than the person, and a certain mysterious dignity, entirely unassumed, first piqued, then astonished, and finally awed the quadroon.

By some caprice, as many would have termed it, the wild, ungovernable savage—for Zulette was a savage, of untamed passions and untaught mind,—began to experience a pro-

found attachment for this innocent maiden, unconsciously in such fearful precincts. Observing that Charity often sat with clasped hands and closed eyes, she ventured one day to ask the question "Are you asleep?" "No," was the reply, "I am talking to my Friend."

The quadroon started, and replied "You believe in Obi?" This called forth the response, "I have a Friend who lives where none can see Him but the shining ones, yet He touches me so closely in my breast that I can feel His presence."

Still more astonished, Zulette cried eagerly "Can he kill those whom he wishes to? Can he make fetish for you?" The cheeks flushed, the eyes brightened with a look of holy hope and trust, while, with a tremulous voice, the dear one made reply. "I know that He can make those alive who have been dead. His power is so great that if He breathes on fire it will not burn you. He once made a man who obeyed Him walk on the sea."

The mind, steeped from childhood in fearful African superstitions, felt itself smitten to the finest fibre, while excited fancy took alarm, prompting the quick, eager response. "This must be the great Obi. Has he ever shown himself to you?" Now ensued words that made the untutored nature tremble, "He reached out of the darkness a shining hand, bright as the sun, and called me 'His child;' since then I know that He is watching over me by day and by night; so long as I love and obey Him not all the power in the world can injure me. It is only permitted that I may see His goodness in bringing deliverance at last."

Here the conversation closed, but, during the dark hours that followed, the quadroon found no sleep, and muttered on her restless pillow, "This is the great fetish that my grandmother told me some possessed in the land beyond the sea. If I harm the girl the Obi will kill me." Then the

impulsive, excited nature cowered at the thought of One invisible, whose hand shone as brightly as the sun and whose breath took away from fire its power to consume, while she muttered, "Oh! wonder man, give me the great fetish too." With the cunning native to her race the precious secret was hoarded, and the slave began from that hour to fear the wrath of Obi, more than the cruel punishments which her mistress was able to inflict.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A DREAM OF JUDGMENT.

Young Love is sweet, in its purity, moving with mystic breath upon the soul's chords, while the music which it awakens reaches far beyond the thought that seeks to measure it and trembles at the golden gates of Heaven. Old Love is sweeter still. Forgetful of age, with the cold rheum in the blood, the crows feet about the eyes, the many wrinkles and the silver hair, the glad heart, purified and renewed through generous self abnegation, enduring as seeing the Invisible, clings closer to its beloved, and, guided by the mystic messenger, moves away to interchange the sweet and holy emotions which the angels know, where this mortal puts on immortality.

Young Passion is fierce and headstrong. It gathers flowers on forbidden ground, and, placing them within the breast, they change to scorpions. But old Passion is diabolical. It walks on, calm and smiling, to its unholy ends, delighting above all in the degradation of the most pure, unsullied natures. Young Passion sometimes reforms; old Passion rarely if ever. It lives immortal in the soul and riots there, terrific, as the flesh crumbles. In the beginning it is a desecration of the outer sanctuary, but, at last, the utter profanation of the holy of holies in the breast. A fiendish desire takes possession of lost women, smiling in their wickedness, who are in a state in which they delight to call good; "evil" and evil "good," and this desire is to poison and corrupt young hearts. The mere earthling labors to destroy

the body, but those who add to the practice of evil a faith and a love of crime are not content to mar the shrine alone.

It aroused the fiend in Lucretia Lorne's bosom to gaze upon that blooming loveliness, left helpless at her mercy. The sight of the fresh, blossoming being, the virginal soul, guiltless of aught that might call to the heart even a lingering regret, stung her to the quick, and the meek eyes, lifted trustfully to Heaven, seemed mournfully to float, in liquid ether, over the wanton's pillow, as with the glance of an accusing spirit. It was in vain to "pish" and "pshaw" and to be inwardly provoked, while daylight lasted, at giving way to the folly, for, in the dark hours, the eyes were still there.

The gay, luxurious woman began to experience dreams of a fearful and ominous character, growing more terrible, till at last, in slumber, she imagined the world on fire, the heavens melting, and the stars, like jewels in a furnace, gathered to an incandescent mass. Old grave-yards were sparkling with newly animated bodies that saints were clothed with, descending from Paradise. The dead were marshalled from every nation, dense as spears of grass in a meadow, far as eye could reach, over the earth that rocked and melted beneath their feet, and the still sea, that, rolling up its gigantic undulations, revealed host after host. The sun and moon had vanished and the blue sky was no more; but high, in the sun's place, a great white throne, and on it ONE before whose fixed glance nature was exhaling into vapors.

Then the silence was broken. From the midst of the throne came a voice calling her name, at which one of those shining men drew near and plucked a book out of her breast. A vast, accusing angel opened it before the throne, reading in sad and preternatural accents her daily thoughts, feelings and actions, to the very hour of that last sleep.

Now, mounting in middle air, the dreamer seemed to

rise; heard the sentence "depart ye cursed," and, burning with insatiable hate of all things good and love of all things impure and evil, while her abandoned passions became serpents in the breast, she fled over vast, sulphurous deserts, over flaming, tossing fire-gulfs, appalled the most to find that the elements, that melted round her fearful flight, were but her own secret vices, changed into a substance intense as light, keen as frost, sharp as splinters of steel and devouring as vitriol.

With heaving breast, and limbs that quivered, and heart beating with heavy strokes as if it were some engine that desperate men work amidst the terrors of a conflagration, the wanton started, experiencing, with returning wakefulness, a sensation of unutterable relief. The streets were still. Touching the repeater under the pillow it rang three. Now rich and flute-like in its melody, then soft as the accents of a little child, came a strain of sacred music:

"Jesus can make the dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean the head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

Such words had never been heard in that sumptuous mansion since she had been its mistress; such words must not be heard in it. Honorable men, opulent men, were now within the walls. What had they to do with Jesus, and His presence on a dying pillow?

To awaken from a dream of the world's judgment, from a dream of being lost,—this was terrible, albeit but a dream. The luxurious couch had not been unshared, though whoever had been there, stealthily gliding away, had left the house at midnight. The voluptuous frame still trembled fearfully, and the imagination sought to reproduce, in images to haunt the outward waking, all the terror, all the woe. She pressed the fingers, ringed with glittering

jewels, into the palms, till the fine, delicate nails forced blood, and then, with a mighty effort, regained self-control. After a brief pause, the mysterious music began again, a strain of mingled wailing and deliverance ;

“Great God, what do I see and hear?
The end of things created :
The Judge of man I see appear
On clouds of glory seated.

“The dead in Christ shall first arise,
At the last trumpets’ sounding,
Caught up to meet Him in the skies,
With joy their Lord surrounding ;

“But sinners, filled with guilty fears,
Behold His wrath prevailing,
For they shall rise and find their tears
And sighs are unavailing.”

No remains of weak credulity survived to blend their incongruous elements with the philosophical maxims received as truth by this woman of the world. Accustomed to trace all events to mundane causes, she soon recognized the voice, the first terror being over, as that of the young lady occupying the apartments immediately above, even though this was the first occasion on which her rest had been disturbed. As the guilty fears vanished, intellect grasped the thought, “This explains my dream. The girl was singing this doleful ditty, and it produced images on the brain.” As fear subsided anger took its place, and, starting up, while a fury began to kindle upon the countenance, she snatched the taper from its vase, touched the spring of the door at the foot of the staircase, and stood in an instant, light in hand, upon the threshold of her ward.

The keen eyes, the compressed lip, the flushed cheeks

and the knitted brow, with which the harlot ventured into that sanctuary of innocence, gave way to mute inquiry and wonder, legibly inscribed upon the countenance. Clothed only in the simple muslin of the night, the pure maiden knelt, with hands clasped upon the breast, and eyes in sacred extacy motionlessly fixed, as if directed toward another light than that which makes the things of nature visible. Now again, while the incomer paused irresolute, carefully closing the door with one hand, grasping in the other the silver taper, shedding forth a flickering flame, arose the same mingled strains of triumph and of awe:

“Great God, what do I see and hear?
The end of things created.
The Judge of man I see appear,
On clouds of glory seated.”

On giving his ward in charge of Madame Lorne, the disguised burglar had mentioned that she had the habit of rising and walking during sleep. The peculiar phenomena of somnambulism had never before been matters of observation, but now, curiosity being aroused, the emotions of the angry woman took a new turn. Shading the light and advancing on tip-toe to the couch, amidst whose drapery the kneeling girl now silently seemed contemplating some viewless object, she held the flame so near to the humid eyes as to singe the brows, and yet the pupils did not move.

On grasping the maiden's delicate hand, that gave no more evidence of being touched than do the cold fingers of the dead. Drawing a poniard from within the folds of her night dress, a weapon never absent either during sleeping or waking hours, she punctured the soft flesh of the hand lying so gently within her own; the blood followed, one little drop as if it were an animated ruby, but still the hand itself did not tremble; there was no sensation. Astonishment now became paramount. The full, voluptuous

bosom, gleaming dimly through the perfumed robe, heaved wildly. Unable to stand she sank into a chair, almost dropping the light in her tremor, caught at the water goblet, drank, and regained in part her lost composure.

Somnambulists sometimes divine strange secrets, as soon this mistress of a harem in a Christian city discovered. The graceful head was slightly inclined away as if in a listening attitude; then the lips moved; the voice whispered "Roger Benbow; brave Roger!"

Curiosity was now stimulated. The thought, "Who is Roger Benbow?" momentarily grew into a silent query. That unspoken question was answered at once. "Roger Benbow was my grandfather's huntsman."

The listener remembered having read that somnambulists, in states of extacy, were sometimes able to read from mind and memory. A sigh heaved the gentle breast, moved as with some sudden pang, and then the sentence dropped from the unconscious lips, "Hearts can be deciphered as well as thoughts."

A little bird, the first harbinger of morning, stirred upon its perch in the locust tree which stood in the old garden beyond the window. It twittered for a moment and was still. In the same instant the quickened senses of the watcher heard the heavy street door of the mansion open and close. So deadened was the sound through interposing walls as to be almost inaudible.

With finger raised, gazing as with the soul rather than the senses, the somnambulist paused an instant and then resumed again, "Hush! I must follow him. The gentleman is going home. That is his house, where the wind blows from the bay and shakes the heavy tree-tops. It is all dark there. I must look inside. That lovely lady is his wife. She waited for his return till past one, then took his miniature from her bosom and kissed it; afterward nursed her little baby and then cried herself to sleep while it nestled in her arms. He is on

his way. Now two men come behind from a narrow lane. One draws a cap over his eyes and presses something hard into his mouth to keep him from screaming, while the other rapidly searches him and takes away a watch and pocket book. Now they hold chloroform under his nostrils and he sinks, as if drunken, upon the pavement. Hush, hush!"

Again the feathered chorister twittered on the locust, and now in a louder key. The somnambulist continued, after a pause, "Brave Roger Benbow! He meant to rescue me, but they murdered him in California."

Groping now at the very verge of a secret of blood and crime, yet still with silent lips, the listener inquired, "Who murdered him?" Again the pure, pale face wore a look of sorrow, the brow contracted as if something painful had passed before the vision, and then the answer followed "It was in the hulk of a ship. They stabbed at him with knives. I see it plainly now. Grasping a pistol the huntsman has fallen upon the floor. The place is burning around them. They rush out into the air. Chelmsford, Joseph Chelmsford; he is the leader." The slight frame shivered; then the voice proceeded, "Dark man, you were not my uncle, you stole me from my mother's house."

Still more excited and astonished, the peering, shrinking wanton inly propounded the inquiry, "Who was this man? Divining the unspoken words, the guiltless lips disclosed the secret. "His name was John Chivers. Benbow shot him on the hulk."

Madame drew a long breath, and again, accustomed to interpret every faint vibration of the air within that place of crime and secrecy, its mistress divined that the massive door was being opened and closed against another departing guest. The happy singer on the locust tree stirred again and preened his feathers, shaking out a rain of melody from the little throat, as if he knew that morning was at hand. The keeper of this gateway of lost souls won-

dered, "Will she track this man as well as the other?" Dead silence followed. Tears trickled down the innocent face, and the somnambulist began to moan. Even the Sultana of this corrupt abode felt a preternatural feeling of awe creeping over the heart, as tear after tear found its way, shed over the approaching shame and ruin of one whom she and those like her had won from virtue and the esteem of his fellows to a felon's fate. "Oh! why," mourned the plaintive voice, "Oh! why did he rob that good man, his master? He abstracted last evening a package of bank notes from the iron safe in the counting house. Hush! I'll tell you why he stole the money, Who is Clarine? I must see. She lives here. While the people were going to the churches on Sunday night,—Oh! I do not want to see that, but I must,—he sat with the girl upon his knee, and she said, 'Gusty, I must have five hundred dollars when you come again.' Then she kissed him. He cursed his poverty; vowed that he had it not; told her that she must wait two months till his quarterly allowance was due, then muttered 'Clarine, dear Clarine, I'd sell my soul for you.' (I can't see any more.—I must see.)—She placed her arms around his neck and whispered, 'No more visits. Gusty, you don't love me; its all a pretext.' Then he answered hoarsely, 'You shall have it.' He had been suspected before by his employer, and the package which he took was placed there to test his honesty. The officers are waiting to arrest him as he crosses the threshold of his lodging place."

No compunctions of conscience troubled her, to satisfy whose grasping avarice Clarine had tempted a gay youth to ruin, yet anxiety clouded the brow and fear stirred the bosom to a sigh. It was now the place of this clear-seeing one to inquire, "Are you frightened because you dreamed of judgment? It is in your mind that Charity's singing produced images upon the brain; but she did not begin her

verses till the dream was over. God sends dreams,—not all dreams,—but He sent yours.”

The troubled wanton gasped out, “Why was this sent?” and grew pale to hear the answer, in a solemn tone, “There is something terrible soon to befall you, unless, instantly, you abandon the things that break the hearts of young wives and that drive giddy boys to robbery;

“Hark they whisper, Angels say,
Sister spirit, come away.

Oh! Madame, I must tell you that, much as you imagine that vision to have been terrible, when around you it becomes just as real as the stars and the shining sun, you will fall and cry out, ‘Better if I never had been born.’”

The fear of some impending calamity now shadowed over the face, and blanched the lips, where the wanton kisses of the evening before left their almost visible impress, but, commanding the nerves and holding reason still, and hanging now breathlessly on every accent, the fateful words, one by one, smote the ear appallingly. “You will never be warned again. I am where the mind beholds the causes of events which shape themselves to actions in the earth; and there are agencies in operation, which, unless God takes mercy on you by interposing some protection, will bring your career to a close by a speedy, sudden and violent death.”

“Who are my enemies; tell me?” now with a sharp, shrill cry, interrogated the guilty mind. Slowly the finger of the dreaming one was lifted and pressed upon the lips; the gentle bosom sighed; the lids closed over the liquid and unshadowed orbs; she sank into a reclining attitude, and slept, unconsciously, as the closed flower within its bud.

The gray light of earliest morning now struggled through the window-bars, while the flame of the taper grew pale, as

all our earthly lives must soon, before the dawning of the second life. Emerging with silent steps, Lucretia Lorne retraced her way, caught at a crimson vial containing some stupefying elixir, tossed a few moments wildly upon her couch, muttered broken words, half curses, half piteous outcries that "she was innocent; that she had done but as others did;" and then slept. The abundant tresses fell into luxuriant curls, and gathered in folds around the snowy neck, and coiled, as if they were serpents seeking their lair, into the dishevelled night robes. The full lips parted; the breathing became more deep. The repeater under the pillow ticked "Time flies, time flies!" The heart answered, throbbing from the crimsoned ventricles, while the blood-drops sought the arteries as if to search and see what danger threatened the body which they still must nourish with the sap of life. The singer in the locust tree forsook his perch and rose to witness the purple glories of the coming day. Great morning rolled his chariot from afar. The white sails at sea, like wings of some vast passage bird, were tinged with bright and ruddy flame. Virtue woke to fight God's battles. Sin stirred itself from guilty revels to plot new deeds of darkness. And still the watcher of the night slept on, forgetting all the Past, unconscious also of the Future, beckoning "on, still on," with poniard in its hand.—Rest, too, unharmed, in peaceful slumbers, thou stolen lamb. What though thou art in a den of vipers? Thy Shepherd is here also. He leaves thee not.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE HARPY'S GUESTS.

The soul of man seems nearer Heaven during the night-watches than when the earth is gay with sunlight. Morning comes, and with it, to almost all, an overweening regard for things of sense and time, a diminished consciousness of the invisible and eternal. Before meridian Madame Lorne, aroused from broken slumbers, recalling gradually the incidents which had transpired during that eventful interview with the young lady in her charge, began to revolve the course to be pursued toward the abductors. She, too, excited by the golden hope of realizing perhaps a fortune through the restoration of Charity to her relatives, and not a little alarmed by the vague hints of an approaching catastrophe, determined to act warily; laboring scheme after scheme by which to outplot the villains when they should return to claim their prize.

Of all the inmates of the mansion, the most fascinating, subtle and experienced, by an intuitive knowledge, in treacherous arts, was one whose name the charmed clear-seer had spoken as Clarine. A gentleman's card, presented to Madame at an early hour, informed her that Col. Tofton was below. Ushered into a gorgeous drawing-room, to while away the brief interval of waiting for the lady of the mansion, the seeming gentleman tossed over the portfolios of prints and then turned to contemplate the paintings on the walls, passing from picture to picture, through arches draped heavily with crimson curtains, till he stood at the threshold

of a reception room smaller and more sumptuously decorated. In charming morning dress, seated on a low footstool, guitar in hand, a dark-haired, olive-cheeked damsel was apparently engaged in tuning the instrument.

The Colonel paused, assumed a courtly air borrowed from recollections of the Rectory, and apologized for the intrusion. Perchance this creature of shame and sorrow had already been instructed in the part which she was to play. At all events she was no stranger to the man of massive jaw and burly figure and bold, dark eyes. Rising, it was to smile, and, in a low voice, to answer, "Col. Tofton," extending at the same time the wildcat's velvet paw, that holds the keen talons concealed till it is time to strike. "Do not let me trespass upon your pleasant pastime, my dear lady." Humming an opera air, Sin affected a gay nonchalance, replying, "If gentlemen will call upon ladies at unseasonable hours, they must be present at rehearsals 'Tis but a little song of my own composition."

The guest was charmed: "Would Miss Clarine favour him?" Crime seated himself in a velvet chair softer than any moss-bed. Sin resumed her place on the footstool, thrummed the guitar for a moment to display slender fingers lit with gems, and then warbled:

"Oh! Life is a butterfly's dream.
Oh! Life is a butterfly's dream.
We float, as we sing,
On a silvery wing,
Till we melt in the mist of the stream.

"Oh! Life is the breath of a kiss.
Oh! Life is the breath of a kiss.
We are born for delight,
As the day for the night,
And we sip from the nectar of bliss.

"Oh! Life is the lover's glad haste,
Oh! Life is the lover's glad haste,
'Ere he clasps to his breast
The sweet girl he has blest,
And sleeps in her bower embraced."

The quadron Zulette entered; the guitar became silent. The singer, with an arch smile, courtesied, while the guest bowed himself from her presence, following the servant to Madame's private room.

The lady herself is languidly reclining on a couch, and affects to be engaged with household bills, but rises to receive the visitor. The Colonel is at ease, knowing upon what footing they stand, or have stood. The stately woman, betraying no signs of recent emotions, complains of temporary illness, is charmed to find her friend looking so well after his western tour, but for once must beg to be excused, after a moments chat.

The Colonel takes a chair and remarks, "My dear Madam, Major Chelmsford and myself, as conjoint guardians of the interesting young lady under your charge, have arrived at the conclusion that the marriage ceremony should be performed without delay." The gentleman's gentleman uses lofty language as befits his anticipated state. The reply is prompt, though in a wearied tone, "Consult your own pleasure, Colonel, and that of the Major; we are entirely at your service." "Do me the favor of a call this afternoon." While speaking she pauses for an instant, to note down a word or two in pencil on a card in her lap, touches the bell, and Zulette enters, greeted by her mistress with "This to Pierre. See that the carte for dinner is strictly followed."

Zulette took the note, but not to Pierre. It was addressed to Clarine, whom we heard a few moments ago singing one of those meretricious ballads which are Satan's honeyed voices by which to charm the victim ere the great

serpent gathers round its crushing folds. Knowing the corrupt man's weakness, the one with whom he had to do determined, through it, to gain time for reflection, in which to mature her plan. The slip of paste board bore but the words "Make this man drink with you. Drug the wine and secure him in your chamber without delay."

Chatting a sufficient time to make sure that her message had been delivered, the lady reached out the soft, dimpled hand, smiled languidly, and rose with a "Bonjour, mon ami. At four this afternoon."

Before that hour the hardy criminal was in no state to make arrangements for prospective bridals. The Spanish girl met him. They jested and sipped wine, and, when he woke again, an opiate still beclouded the brain; the mind, overpowered, in part, by the fumes of the narcotic, refused to play its wonted part. Dark, glittering eyes glanced stealthily through an aperture in the heavy curtains of the couch; a light step glided noiselessly toward the door; a gemmed hand as silently turned the key, leaving the guest a prisoner, not for one hour only, or for one day. Muttering a drowsy oath, he sank back languidly upon the pillow, but soon revived to call for drink, while the tongue began to parch and the veins to burn, as if the blood was turning to flame. Finding a goblet at hand he ventured to taste its contents; the draught was palatable, cool, soothing. Draining it, he sank upon the pillow, and slept again.

Rising, as the night began to darken, with unsteady nerves and confused brain, he was unable to stand without assistance. The potion had not yet accomplished its full office. Dimly the guest remembered an appointment with Madame Lorne, and now heard a voice, that seemed yet no voice, but merely some echo in the memory, calling, as if in the accents of Chivers, "Up Jack, or lose the girl! Up Jack, or lose the girl!" Reason began to return; the will put spirit into nerve and muscle; reeling like a drunken man

he sought the door but fell heavily upon the thick carpet, that gave back only a faint, dull sound. The fall that jarred the frame served as a reactive agent to mind and memory, while through the pent corridors of the breast the muffled echoes of the voice of Chivers seemed to come again, "Up Jack, or lose the girl!" This time more warily rising, and supporting the heavy frame and the staggering knees against the wall, he reached the entrance; fumbling at the door knob the experienced burglar soon detected fastened bolts and absent key. The thought "I am a prisoner," sharp and quick, forced its way through the rapidly obscuring senses, and, with the last effort of will, throwing the entire weight of his person against the pannels, the desperate man sought to burst the barrier. The good oak hardly stirred, while, shaken by the concussion, the captive reeled and lay prostrate. Delirium supervened.

There are organizations, which, for the time, become dispossessed of reason under the influence of opium or drugs of a kindred nature. Soon after the door was opened, but not by her, who, with beguiling arts, had entrapped the felon. In place appeared the lithe, agile quadroon and also the porter, old but with brawny, sinewy arms, Zulette quietly remarking to her associate, "Miss Clarine is unfortunate in her friends. This gentleman called on her in the morning; they drank the better part of a bottle of wine together, and now he is flighty and must be kept quiet."

A little more of the narcotic was administered in a cooling draught. This added fuel to the fire, and soon the brain, as if it were some prison house, began to send forth the secret thoughts that were its tenants into the light of day. This may have been the object which Madame Lorne had sought to accomplish. She entered, coolly sat by the bedside, retaining only the quadroon at her command, and then noted down, sentence by sentence, the loose and disconnected ravings of the felon.

On the evening of the first day of Col. Tofton's illness, a gentleman called who had the entré of the establishment. The card which is sent up to Madame's room bears the name "Major Chelmsford." He also is received by the lady in her boudoir.

The wanton greets her guest with every real charm of person set off and adorned by all the arts of one skilled in ministering to the delight of the eye. All traces of care, of anxiety or of outward responsibilities, are laid aside. An air of quiet luxury pervades the place. The perfume of flowers floats to the soothed sense. The light is that between daylight and dark, when every object seems to lose its sharp, fixed outline, and to melt away into soft indistinctness. The man of iron will and hard heart, whom all beauty soon palled that was not overpowering, felt and feared the spell; and, taking in with one quick glance the picture, steeled soul and body to act in freedom from its influence.

Languidly rising, with a motion gliding and slow, as if disturbed from some soothing and joy-producing revery, the lady accosted the slightly-embarrassed stranger, affecting delight, and remarking that "She had expected the pleasure of an interview, during the afternoon, with Col. Tofton and himself; but that gentlemen were often forgetful of appointments when ladies were in the case;" purring this with a voice toned to express a dreamy indolence, a mind not bent on scheming, not in a condition to scheme; venturing at the same time a look, as if to add, through the eyes, "I am in a mood better to listen to the gallant than the man of business."

Chelmsford was not deceived by the arts of the enchantress, and, with the hard and resolute tone of one who will not be put off with excuses, replied: "I am astonished, Madame. Col. Tofton has not left the door of your mansion since entering at an early hour in the day."

Madame, who had remained in the attitude in which she had risen to receive, motioned her visitant to a luxurious seat at hand, dropping herself, plumed and radiant, into an arm-chair, first touching a match to the shaded lamp upon the mantle, and sitting in such a manner that, while the outlines of her own countenance were in shadow, those of the *vis-a-vis* were in full relief; and then spoke with the same feline purr in the voice, "Our friend left me, sir, after an interview of a few moments, during which he made an engagement which he has not yet returned to fulfill." Before the confederate found words in reply, adding: "By the way, Major, can you inform me if at any time you have made the acquaintance of the Rev. Dr. Bushwig?"

The burglar shifted uneasily upon his seat; but, too experienced to allow a shade to cloud his face, or a changed accent to betray perturbation of mind, fearing now that the object for which he had schemed and sinned so deeply was in danger of being frustrated, replied: "Dr. Bushwig? I have heard the name. An Englishman, I think; a sporting parson?"

Now the plotting mind of this astute felon was clear and active, silently reasoning, "Either Tofton has betrayed me or we both are betrayed by others. I am now where neither of my accomplices are within hail. I must be wary. Jack Tofton has not the wit to plan a scheme by which to put me off and keep the girl without dividing the plunder. I might have done it. Madam has pumped young Miss. Tofton must be found and recovered. How to do it is the question; how to escape myself; how once more to obtain possession of the prize under lock and key."

Cool, smiling, sinking now apparently into dreamy languor again, the lady reclined, toying with a Spanish fan. Neither spoke.

Soon the brain of the man, fertile to invent and wary to execute, revolved, "I can never trap her till she thinks that

she has trapped me." Chelmsford seldom looked at either man or woman, but, when he did, the glance was quick, springy and subtle. He now schooled the eyes to utter successfully the falsehood which he knew the tongue would not blunder over.

Then, one glance at the stately, languid woman, eyeing him stealthily, said plainly, "I would give the world to be on a lover's footing," while the sigh which followed spoke as distinctly, "she is too fine for me; altogether above my reach; I have no chance."

The demure woman lifted the large, magnetic eyes, till one penetrative glance darted instantaneous fire into the scheming brain. Then, while the countenance seemed like that of girlish innocence unconscious of its power, the lips opened with the brief remark, "You look sad, Mr. Chelmsford."

Dropping now from the affected manner of the gentleman into the colloquial tone most familiar, he answered, with a voice rough but seemingly honest and unaffected, yet toned to sadness, "Well I may, Madame. Gold will not buy good looks, nor beauty either."

The fan which meanwhile had fluttered in the lady's lap, toyed with by jeweled, dimpled fingers, rose, half unfolded, serving to cover in seeming a slight confusion, as the rejoinder came, "Beauty, sometimes, yields to other inducements than those of fortune. Rough hands pluck sweet flowers."

Instantly the rogue thought "They are all alike. She can be honey-fuggled as well as Ben. The bait has taken." The woman's meditations were, "This is no boy; he knows a woman's weak side and is playing lover to wind himself into my sympathies and out of my toils. I will humor him."

It was now Chelmsford's cue. "I don't care particularly for Jack Tofton," thus he began "but there is one I do care for."

"Charity Green?" queried the lady, "a sly little puss. Gentlemen have odd tastes to admire that pale snow-bird."

The adept in man and woman's ways felt a scarce perceptible thrill of satisfaction. Madame, perhaps, might really be yielding. It is a good sign to the suitor when she to whom he pays his court speaks slightly of another's charms. So honesty, with bluff, Saxon straightforwardness, answered, "No! not Charity Green."

The dark, magnetic eyes were slowly lifted, with a glance as if to read his very soul. A melting look mingled with the searching scrutiny, as the soft voice purred the query. "Major Chelmsford must be in love with himself?"

"A second time, no, Madame," responded the villain, while hypocrisy itself might have blushed, and the father of falsehood seen his own arts transcended by this hopeful scion of a fallen race. "No, Madame—one as high above Joseph Chelmsford as the stars yonder out-wink a watchman's glim."

Once more, and now with a look of mute inquiry, growing soft, yet brilliant, through their dewy mist, the eyes of the enchantress met his own, nor could he well resist the temptation to gaze and drink in the intoxication which they sought to pour upon the brain; then came the answer of the lady, while languor gave way to interest, "I might affect to misunderstand you, Sir, but I will not. Calling for the purpose of inquiring for Colonel Tofton, you conclude by affecting admiration for me."

The Siren had now found the solitary weakness of Cuning Joe, whose pride it was to believe himself a perfect adept in the art of dissimulation. For a moment this rejoinder had thrown the artist in falsehood off his guard. She saw and noted how rapidly the eye changed in its expression, and bitterly whispered to her own heart, "It is the old game. Men think that if they can persuade a woman that they idolize her person, she gives way to a

credulity which has no bounds." Musing thus the reader of a thousand hearts before betrayed no signs of how deeply she had fathomed this one. The hands clasped upon the bosom, and sinking once more into a reposeful attitude, self-complacent as if enjoying the incense offered by a new worshiper, she looked again, and murmured, "Your eyes pain me!" The full breast heaved a sigh, the fan fell to the floor, and, as the skillful knave restored it to its place, her voice grew more soft and musical, while, reaching out the jeweled hand, and suffering it to rest for a moment encircled by the fingers that had just restored the ornament, the red lips whispered, "At least, my Dear Sir, let us be friends."

Unholy fires began to sparkle in the cold and calculating eye. Quick to follow up the advantage which she divined at once to have been gained, the Siren rose, inclining the head toward him as she moved away, with a glance in which coy timidity seemed mingling with doubt, irresolution, and a dawning love; then, reaching the sideboard, poured out a glass of wine, following it with another from the same flask and placing the two upon a salver. While a slight sound in the hall below afforded pretext for averting the face as if to listen, she extended the beverage, carefully watching in the mirror to perceive which glass he might select.

The rogue reasoned, "This drink cannot be hocussed. She poured both wine glasses fair from the same decanter. Her face is turned away. I'll take the one nearest to her, and leave her the one which she means for me. Let me see her drink first, too." The lady watched the motion in the mirror, the workings of the face, the furtive eye-glance, while her lips wreathed sardonically as she beheld him take,—the glass which she had prepared for him.

Again the jeweled hand sought the sideboard, this time to produce daintily-cut morsels of richly fruited cake. The

burglar sat at ease, eyeing the wine, not yet venturing to taste. Gaily humming a note or two of some lively air, the wanton, now ringing her own glass against the one held by her neighbor, and then with "Must I set the example," sipped, and chatted, and broke the shreds of cake; while, feeling now entire security, the dark spirit with whom she had just pledged friendship, drained the sweet elixir.

"Come, my friend," resumed blithe Wantonness, while Cunning Joe felt delicious languor stealing along the veins and coiling itself within the breast: "Come, my friend, I am disengaged for the evening. You will not leave me." The poison began to work; it was one that intoxicates the senses while it beguiles the reason into rash security.

The burglar began to think "This is better than I hoped. The dimly gleaming arm stole from within the loosely flowing sleeve and momentarily rested against the hand that now reached out the empty wine glass. Securing the advantage already gained, by another death-dealing, bewildering look of the wicked, shameless eyes,—sufficiently experienced now to know that her prey was in the meshes of the net, she smiled and said, "You have never seen the cage where we keep the singing bird which Tofton and yourself have so kindly left with us. Would you like a sly peep?"

Still more subtly worked the two fold intoxication of the drug that bewilders the senses and the vice that burns into the soul. Briskly as a youthful gallant, with cunning leer and words of assent, the guest arose, while the sorceress who had beguiled him opened the door of the guarded staircase. They ascended together on the narrow, winding way; while perfumed tresses touched his cheek. A sudden boldness worked in the heart; opportunity was tempting; he stole an eager kiss, murmuring meanwhile a sentence about love.

Love in a seraglio? Miserable counterfeit of that pure

flame which fills the bosoms of the innocent with tender yearnings, mingling with the tide of soul that goes up to God in prayer, and then flowing forth to lift the fallen, to comfort the disconsolate, to do in ten thousand deeds of holy ministration the Master's blessed will! Yet they called it "love," as Satan calls vice "virtue," and fain would persuade the silly enthusiast that Heaven's joys are but a dreamy pretence and Hell's torments an eternal satisfaction.

They were now at the threshold of the apartment of Charity Green, entering while still the whispered sentence had not died away. The innocent maiden rose with a look of silent inquiry not unmingled with woful terror; and now the strong man's limbs began to grow weak, while the film of coming stupor gathered before the brain. Bidding her guest be seated, the deceiver touched again the burning hand and glanced searchingly, while incoherent words began to take the place of the collected answer. Then the curtain fell.

"Charity, my dear," said Madame blandly, "have the goodness to follow me to the apartment below." The door closed with a spring lock. Chelmsford was encaged, unconscious of his condition, within the secluded prison prepared, by his own adroit management, for Charity Green.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE NEW WILL.

The will of the Earl of Riverside had been duly proved. Dated a month previous to his sudden decease it contained provisions under which hitherto the executors had retained possession and administered upon the estate. Of the entailed property, descending with the fief of Riverside, the valuable freehold known once as Marshland, and including the fertile meadow divided by the ancient Richmanstown causeway, on which Sloppery now stood, had passed, by course of law, into the hands of Squire Brompton of the Priory, as trustee of the unknown heirs of Sir Miles Wallingford, it having been decided that, by virtue of the terms of the instrument under which it had originally gone into the possession of that ancient family, no act of attainder or confiscation could ever cause it to be alienated from the heirs male. The unentailed property proving to be far more valuable than had been supposed, Dr. Hartwell, as residuary legatee, became the possessor of thirty thousand pounds sterling, after the sums set apart for the payment of the bequests to whomsoever should produce the missing heiress had been reserved.

A new will was now discovered, dated at the town house of the Earl, only a few days prior to his death. The attorney entrusted with the settlement of the sporting obligations of the deceased nobleman, and in his confidence for years, testified, under oath, that a secret drawer in the escritoir of the late Earl, used as a receptacle for such pri-

vate papers as referred to the pleasures of a man about town, and which hitherto had been unsuspected, having been found to exist, the important document was contained within one of its compartments. There it might have slumbered still had it not been necessary to search for a lost package of receipts from sporting parties, debts of this nature, supposed to be cancelled, having been revived.

Mr. Bluefil, the Attorney, on producing this unexpected prize, betrayed no personal interest in its recovery. Written in the hand of Earl Roger, and in his brief, sententious style, the disconnected and ill-formed letters betrayed that death was already feeling after the fingers that held the pen. Reversing many of the legacies of the former document, it bequeathed all of the unentailed estate to the nephew of the testator, the Rev. Alphonso Bushwig, appointing him also sole executor. The preamble stated that the former will was revoked; it having been established to his mind that the missing heiress, abducted by gipsies, had deceased at Coddlington Green; and also that the character of his nephew had been grievously misrepresented by persons formerly in his confidence.

On making this discovery, Attorney Bluefil addressed a letter from London to the Rector of Richmanstown, mentioning full particulars, and asking for instructions. The Divine replied by mail, that his solicitor was Sergeant Wildfire, of Lincoln's Inn; and that Mr. Bluefil would add to the present very sensible weight of obligations by an immediate consultation.

The learned Sergeant informed the Rector at once that the will was genuine, according to the best of his knowledge, that experts had pronounced the hand-writing to be that of the late Earl, and, so certain was he of its validity, that ten thousand pounds could be borrowed, if necessary, upon its face.

By the tenor of this, about sixty thousand pounds of

umentailed property devolved prospectively upon the fortunate legatee. One Solomon Mendez, a money-lender of the metropolis, was applied to, upon the part of Dr. Bushwig, for a loan of fifteen thousand pounds, immediately after the receipt of the startling intelligence, and the Israelite, allured by the large bonus, after submitting the instrument to counsel, advanced the requisite sum.

Proceedings were immediately commenced, in Doctors' Commons, for its establishment, the witnesses being Daniel Tallboys, of London, gentleman, and Benjamin Pipes, formerly the Earl's valet. Mr Tallboys was now a bankrupt, waiting for discharge, under the insolvent act, having been formerly a man about town, but ruined by fast living. This witness on being interrogated averred, that, hearing that a horse named Highflyer, which the Earl had desired to purchase, was in the market, and having a prospective interest in its sale, he had called upon the nobleman for the purpose of disposing of the property; that the Earl of Riverside was much excited, and writing with extreme haste; that he seemed almost unable to contain his rage at some party whom he termed 'hypocritical rascal' but otherwise was as usual before dinner; that, desiring the visitant to be seated, he rang for his man, and signed and sealed the document in their presence, acknowledging it to them as his last will and testament, and requesting them to sign it as witnesses, which they did.

It was with difficulty that Pipes, the valet, was discovered. He was found at last keeping an inn in a suburb of the metropolis, a place frequented apparently by lovers of skittles and similar amusements, its cognomen being the "Boxer's Arms." The jolly Boniface, on being interrogated, confirmed the narrative of Mr. Tallboys, mentioning that he remembered that just before the Earl's death he was called in to witness a document acknowledged as a will. One thing that fixed it in his mind was that a gentleman

was there about a horse called Highflyer, who also signed his name. He could even remember the time—it was half past eleven—for the Earl drew his repeater and struck the half hour while placing the instrument away. In this, also, Pipes was corroborated by the testimony of Mr. Tallboys.

Had not this document revisited the light so opportunely the condition of the Rector of Richmanstown would have been almost desperate, having strained his credit in every direction. Three thousand pounds were due to his solicitors, and five thousand to the Sloppery usurer, Hezekiah Pinch. The Divine had even resorted to our former acquaintance, the "oil-filler of the lamps of Jerusalem," and borrowed from him fifteen hundred pounds at enormous rates of usance. Besides, there were large outstanding accounts of the grocer and wine merchant. In fine, the condition of his affairs was one of extreme embarrassment. This sudden windfall at once removed the cloud. After discharging the claims of his solicitors, and liquidating various minor debts, allowing his bonds to remain as before with Pinch and the undertaker, about ten thousand pounds stood to his credit on the bankers' books.

The executors under the former will, being summoned by Sergeant Parks, met him in London. The old gentleman was gloomy, and remarked that the prospect was that the document under which they had been acting would be set aside. Writs were immediately served upon them for the arrest of all their proceedings, both as appellants in the appeal from the decision of Baron Gumble, and as executors of the estate and guardians of Rosa Devereux. Dr. Hartwell alone retained his usual serenity, remarking that a deep conviction was fixed within his mind that the young Countess would yet, and at no distant period, be recovered; and that the hand of Divine Providence would be singularly manifest in the detection and punishment of the offenders. The Rector thought it also probable that the astute

and crafty foe with whom they had to deal was in some manner connected with a new conspiracy to defraud, and that the recently discovered instrument was but a forgery.

A letter from America, received at this juncture by Dr. Hartwell, contributed to inspirit them. Following it came another also serving not a little as encouragement to continue the controversy. The first, written by Peter Styles and bearing the post mark, Proutville, Conn., U. S. A., related his discovery of the recent seclusion of Charity Green with the particulars of which we are already familiar. In this the good man intimated his determination to remain in the neighboring city of New York, either until a clue should be obtained to her present place of captivity or definite instructions received from her guardians. The second epistle was from the learned civilian Epaphroditus Wagge, and indited the day after the soiree at Smithopolis. In this the Past High Mitre mentioned that a distinguished English gentleman, Col. Tofton by name, but known in his former place of residence as Dr. Bushwig's valet, was enjoying the hospitalities of Western friends, and had that day mailed two letters, one to the Rector of Richmanstown and the other to Madame Lorne, Charleston, S. C.

A missive was instantly dispatched to Peter Styles, with instructions to proceed at once to the City of Charleston, to procure the aid of expert detectives, to ascertain the character of Madame Lorne and her establishment, and, if possible, to discover if Charity Green was in her custody.

On Christmas night, in company with two plainly clad and unassuming gentlemen, "traveling South," as one of them casually observed, "to enjoy the hospitalities of the season," we behold, with firm step and clear, bright eye, the father of sleepy Molly, thinking himself for a moment almost in old England, while listening to the chiming of St. Michael's bells.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A NIGHT'S ADVENTURES.

We now return to Charleston, and on arriving there discover that Cunning Joe is still confined within the secluded chamber formerly assigned to Charity Green. After venturing on the daring step of beguiling the two principals of the three confederates into a temporary imprisonment, the mistress of the establishment was in an alarming position, which at every step became more complicated and dangerous. Taking Zulette, the quadroon, more fully into her confidence, with promises of freedom and reward in a few weeks, interest now bound the servant whom fear had alone constrained before. The invalid gentleman, as Toftor was styled, now being removed to a secluded apartment near the leads, was kept there under double lock and key. Delirium still continuing, Madame, from time to time, with note-book and pencil in hand, kept watch by his bedside, noting down the incoherent ravings and still administering medicines designed to reduce the physical powers and continue the disordered mental state.

Carefully concealed within the inner lining of the felon's apparel letters were discovered from the Rector of Richmanstown, with whose name, history and prospects the listener was rapidly becoming familiar. These were brief and equivocal, so that none could be compromised by any portion of their contents without corroborative and elucidative testimony. On instituting a more thorough search

an instrument rewarded the seeker of far greater importance,—an agreement, written and signed in some fluid of crimson hue resembling blood. This also was equivocal in its phraseology, stating simply that the parties, whose names were appended, pledged themselves to an equal division of a certain treasure of which they were in search, binding themselves also to abide by the decision of the lot so far as might affect the disposal of the lady in whose behalf the search was instituted. Other papers, when perused, cleared up many mysteries, being two unsigned bonds without a date, prepared for signatures, in each of which a party, whose name was yet unwritten, covenanted to pay respectively to Mr. Joseph Chelmsford and Mr. Benjamin Wiggins ten thousand pounds sterling money of Great Britain, as compensation for their services in searching out, rescuing, and restoring herself to liberty; they relinquishing, for this consideration, all claims to a legacy of ten thousand pounds bequeathed by the Earl of Riverside to the reclaimers of his abducted granddaughter and heiress, Rosa Devereux. Folded within were also other unsigned bonds, promising to pay each of these gentlemen two thousand pounds sterling annuity during their natural lives, as a final compensation for risks undergone and advances made in the conduct of the same enterprise.

Returning now to the other unwilling inmate of the Mansion, Major Chelmsford, we perceive that the potion, which at first soothed and exhilarated the spirits, was designed to induce a slumber of more than one day's duration, and also to create intolerable thirst and consequent delirium. Of Tofton the artful woman had little fear; her chief anxiety being on account of his associate.

In the orderly mansion, where Sin was served with quiet decorum, no change occurred, and the countenance of its proprietor shut out from all beholders, with an impenetrable mask, the secrets that now pressed heavily upon the

burdened breast. Complaining of a slight ailment, the lady was invisible to her friends, and supposed to be retired to her own room. There, by night, a couch was spread for the fair girl, around whose innocent spirit this storm of crime and sorrow was gathering so fast.

The mind of Madame Lorne was speedily made up concerning the course to be adopted toward her charge, and she remarked to her in a few words "My Dear, your life has been endangered by persons who have abducted you from your relatives, in a foreign country. I am endeavoring to save and restore you, but my own existence is jeopardised. Trust me, therefore, that I am doing all things for the best, and execute my requests during a few days with entire promptness, as a single inadvertency may place it beyond my power to be of assistance to you." And now her plot began to be developed.

First, Chelmsford was visited during an interval of stupor, and his clothing searched inch by inch. On examining the rings taken from his fingers the thieves' profession began to betray itself, one containing a sharp curved lancet, flying open when touched by a hidden spring, and used in cutting through the cloth of garments, and in obtaining access to secret pockets and their contents. Between the inner and the outer soles of his boots papers were discovered. The burglar grew more and more insane as the night passed and the day followed, raving during the talkative paroxysms which came on, about his "cursed luck." Word by word, still with note book in hand, the artful woman jotted down the incoherent sentences, until the scheme for the abduction of Charity Green was mastered in all its dark and tortuous details.

Wily as a serpent, the first care of Madame Lorne was to produce such a condition of health upon the prisoner that he should be for some time unable to exert his great physical strength. Taking advantage of an interval of stupor,

assisted by the quadroon, she opened a vein in the right arm and bled him profusely. This produced a singular change, and the burglar began to detail plot after plot, replete with villany, as if the mind must find an outlet for its hidden crimes. Schooled in evil deeds as was this bold, bad woman, she trembled before the secrets which escaped, drop by drop, from the utterly abandoned criminal. Gladly would she now have given up the young lady, and washed her hands of the whole affair, convinced that at some point there was danger of a terrific catastrophe. Yet, having embarked in the undertaking, as she reasoned, safety could only be found now in delivering the orphan from their toils. Untouched in the moral nature, self-interest remained an all-powerful motive to proceed. The love of life was strong, the love of money equally powerful.

In the dead hours of the third night after her terrific dream of the last judgment, both of the burglars having been now two days in her custody, and the outlines of their meditated scheme linked together in her mind, with throbbing temples and excited brain she tossed upon the restless pillow and longed for morning, when, once more, the lovely maiden, sleeping calmly near at hand, lapsed into the state of somnambulism. "Now," thought the watcher, "I may discover some method by which to meet the crisis."

"Hush!" again began the sleeper, "Peter Styles thinks that I am concealed in this house, and is watching it from the opposite side of the street. Who is that dark man skulking in the lane round the corner? He is watching it too. Roger Benbow, brave Roger, he was one of those who murdered you upon the burning ship." The slight frame began to shiver, as, in solemn accents the voice resumed "Blood! blood! Peter Styles will tell you all about it. He is a good man; call him in."

The decision of Madame was taken at once; throwing around her person a heavy silk wrapper, thrusting the feet

in slippers, and taking care to secure the apartment on leaving it, she stood in a moment gazing through a blind window in the outer door, beholding a man opposite gazing intently at the edifice. Opening the door she beckoned. Unhesitatingly, at the signal, the stranger crossed the street, surprised to hear himself accosted with "Is your name Styles? If it is spend no time in answering but enter at once."

The fearless man was there to take risks and now ventured on a fearful one, recollecting, perchance, Who guided him through the waters of Feather River.

With finger on lip and lamp in hand Madame Lorne led the way, followed by her guest. At the foot of the staircase she turned and looked him in the face, beholding a resolute foreigner, somewhat worn as if from recent illness. The right arm was concealed within the breast of the great coat as if it grasped a weapon, while the lips were compressed like those of one who knows that at any moment life may be put in jeopardy; but the eyes spoke plainly "In a good cause we have no fear to die;" they were pure eyes. The adventurer was praying inwardly for Divine light and guidance,—and they came.

The woman divined, by intuitive perception, that the man was found to whom she had been directed. Pausing before venturing on the stairs he spoke, "Madame, a word. Deal with the young lady under your roof as with your own daughter. I have journeyed hither in search at the command of her guardians." The conductress perceived at once that the path was opening to safety and success and led the speaker instantly into the boudoir, whispering "Speak low; our lives are all in danger," adding interrogatively, "You have means of identification?"—Before Styles could frame an answer, the sweet, mysterious voice from the inner apartment thrilled him to the quick with, "Peter, you have come at last."

This was no time for half confidences. "Mr. Styles," began Madame, "who is the young lady whom you seek." His reply was explicit: "Miss Rosa Devereux, whom we suppose to be identical with Charity Green." Instantly came the response, "Are you able to put the question of identity between the parties beyond a doubt?" To this Styles answered: "If you can describe to me any particular birthmark upon the young lady's person." Zulette, during the young lady's illness had pointed out the letter R traced in indelible ink upon the arm, and a crimson heart. When, therefore, the woman described these providential cyphers, Peter wept; they were genuine tears. Recovering himself in an instant, it was to respond, "Madame, this is the person whom I had supposed."

This conversation had taken place in a low tone in the boudoir. Again the charmed watcher spoke, and now in a clear, penetrative voice, "Peter Styles," Leading the way, the proud, queenly mistress of the mansion beckoned him to follow. Drawing near the couch, the startling words met his ear, "They will kill you, good Peter, as they did Benbow, if you lose time! Be quick; a man is watching for you outside. Take him and the present danger is over." Styles, aware of the gift of somnambulism possessed by the young heiress, listened with deep interest, and then, addressing Madame Lorne, made the inquiry: "Do you know to whom she refers?" "Yes" was the answer; "he is a party concerned in the abduction." Once more the soft voice, and now imploringly, was heard, and Peter's mind was made up. Without delay, grasping the weapon, he whispered: "I have two New York detectives within a stone's throw. Are you willing that I should go down and endeavor to arrest this man?" The woman's heart beat fast, though her countenance betrayed no indication of fear, as she replied, in the same low key, "Act quickly."

Noiselessly proceeding to the door, Styles glided stealthily

over the threshold, while the mistress of the mansion remained inside holding it slightly ajar. The adventurer, led by a feeling that was sure as fate, moved to the right, walking rapidly, as if desirous of leaving the neighborhood as soon as possible. Approaching the dark alley, it seemed that a slight shadow wavered upon the obscurely lighted flag-stones, as if some dark object peering out had drawn itself behind the building, about an arm's length in advance. Reaching the corner where the shadow had seemed to fall, swift, as if moved by lightning, he turned, and in an instant was wrestling in the grasp of an athletic man. Neither had an opportunity of using their weapons, and both fell heavily in the struggle, the prowler uppermost; but, in that fall, the rescuer shouted, "Help! murder!" The detectives now had reached the spot, accompanied by an officer of the patrol, and Handy Ben rose in the custody of justice, handcuffed almost before Styles recovered from the bewilderment of the concussion. Whispering hurriedly to his associates, Peter slipped away, and in a few moments had reentered the mansion of Madame Lorne, with face cut and bleeding, with contused limbs, but otherwise uninjured. The lady met him at the door, and together, in silence, they rose to the boudoir, where the welcome word greeted her, "The man is handcuffed and in custody."

Hastily removing the more obvious tokens of the rencontre, the brave man held himself in readiness for the next emergency.

Once more the dreamer started from her sleep, while the lips moved in silent prayer. Two watched in mute thought, both engaged in the same enterprise, yet with a great gulf separating them, fixed like that between Dives and Lazarus; and one adored, and the other trembled.

Again the tender voice began, "Peter, Peter Styles, Rosa Devereux is saved, thank God." Charity had never called herself by that name, had never known that it was her

name. "In the morning go to the post office. There you will find a letter which must be kept. Ask for it in the name of Col. Tofton. He is this lady's guest."

That letter afterward obtained, proved to be a simple note without a signature, containing these words, "You have been informed against as one of the parties concerned in the robbery of Wingate Hall, the affair having been made public through the confession of one of the accomplices, and a portion of the plate recovered. I will quadruple the annuity whenever she is dead." In this epistle was a draft for two hundred and fifty pounds, and the bill of exchange identified the writer. It was purchased of a London banker by the Rev. Alphonso Bushwig. Toward morning, heavily ironed, Joseph Chelmsford was conducted, in a close carriage, to the city prison, in feeble health, and like a man who is but partially recovered from a drunken stupor which has left the reason unsettled.

His removal was effected quietly, the officers receiving a generous douceur from Madame Lorne, who wished the respectability of her mansion to be kept unimpeached. The effects of the burglars contained the evidence of more than one robbery committed within the precincts of Charleston and its vicinity, and they were retained in custody to answer; it being impossible to hold them under the charge of abduction, that crime having been committed in another State.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CHRISTMAS AT THE PRIORY.

Again the bells are pealing on the frosty air. The blessed morning of the Nativity, with gracious gifts and blessings, with liberal bestowment of alms and hospitable provision for all who come, is observed with more than usual courtesy and kindness at Squire Brompton's Elizabethan mansion, the Priory.

Married when a mere lad, by the influence of parental authority, to the only daughter of a neighboring knight of the shire, that two contiguous estates might be encircled in a ring fence, and left a widower shortly afterward, with an only son, young Hugh, this stately gentleman has whiled away life there in quiet retirement. While the neighboring squires, too many of them, decay with years, the ripe scholar seems rather to mellow, and his forty-seventh birthday finds him with unwrinkled countenance and eyes where the youthful fire is tempered to a kindly and genial glow. He has not escaped, it is true, the infection of that subtle poison, worldliness, which makes the soul distrust and set slight value on its purest impulses. There is too much of the courtier, too little of the self-denying lover of his kind. But a something has occurred which wakens the long silent music of the spirit. For more than twenty years feeding upon the rarest fruits of our English Parnassus, with no production of his own to attest that the floating fancy-shapes had ever descended into words, he now revives the masques, the mimes and revels of three centuries ago. So long appar-

ently a barren plant, his intellect now flowers like the aloe, blooming into a splendid corolla at the sunny touch of love. To transmute thought into feeling is the artist's privilege. Whether from marble or canvas, from the printed volume or the mimic world beyond the footlights, the great aim is to touch the heart. But, first, to translate emotion into its own befitting garb of language, tint or outline requires the Master's gift. Perchance this rare faculty belonged to the stately scholar.

Conspicuous amongst the guests, the blooming widow, addressed by so many with admiring words as Lady Devereux, now in the full maturity of charm, with not a leaflet withered from its hue, leads the eyes captive even where she fails to touch the heart. The absent look, the languid smile, the utter indifference to homage, betray all the while a soul that sleeps in its seclusion, or whose waking powers one voice alone can summon.

The splendid circle in the drawing room embraces, perhaps, a hundred of the loveliest, bravest and wisest of the county; representatives of old families, and, here and there, those new men whom gentle and knightly deeds continually elevate to share the honors of ancient worth and greatness.

At an early hour in the evening the entertainments begin. The banqueting hall of the Priory is fitted up as a theatre, while the winter gardens, famous for their extent and perfection, become, with their tropical atmosphere, and plants and flowers of every clime, bathed in a soft, dim light, as from some more ethereal and visionary sun, the mimic habitation of the Fairy Queen.

A band of concealed musicians announced the opening of the festivities, with an overture composed of the most exquisite morceaux from Oberon and the Midsummer Night's Dream, and skillful artists, throwing spirit into the words, and grace in all the action, enacted the spectacle of

THE CHRISTMAS FAIRIES.

THE CHRISTMAS FAIRIES:

OR, SHAKSPEARE'S DREAM.

The gardens are temporarily darkened. Then a solitary nightingale is heard, trilling to its mate. A tender light, as of the rising moon, reveals the youthful Shakspeare, asleep upon a mossy bank. Colored flames begin to twinkle in the shrubbery. A fountain, as by magic, throwing up, instead of jets of water, gold and silver fires, sheds a mystic halo upon the dreaming face and graceful form. With winglets tipped with purple and gold, the Fairy Queen appears, her advent preceded by music still more aerial. The blossoms twined around her temples and wreathed about her spangled robes all glisten as if formed of the spirits of the flowers. Contemplating the sleeper for a moment and touching brow, eyes, lips and breast with a jeweled wand, she sings:

I leave with thee the gift of song,
The poet's fame for ages long.
Wake from thy slumber, youth, arise!
Behold the viewless Fairy skies:
With dewy pinions wide unfurled
They rain enchantments on the world.
Wake, poet, wake,
For Love's sweet sake!

I leave with thee the insight wise
To read the lore that maidens prize,
The golden archer's flight to trace,
And rule the hearts that rule the race.

My fairy fount of smiles and tears
 'Tis thine to weave around the spheres.
 Wake, poet, wake,
 For Love's sweet sake!

A graceful youth, attired as a forester, clad in hose and doublet
 Lincoln green, with bow and quiver, now enters, blowing a mel-
 blast upon the bugle and begins:

I am the sprite of Robin Hood,
 And haunt for aye the wild Greenwood.
 I wind my horn through vale and mere,
 And stir by night the dappled deer.
 Tra—lira—la—my bugle horn
 Awakes the sylvan hollow.
 I rouse the hunters in the morn;
 Tra—lira—la—they follow.

Awake thee, wake; by day and night
 I know where fairies take delight,
 And where the green-coat elves disport,
 And cowslip lords and ladies court.
 Tra—lira—la—blow bugle horn
 O'er fairy vale and hollow;
 Awake thee, wake, 'tis fairy morn;—
 Tra—lira—la—oh! follow.

The Fairy Sun breaks through a mist of rainbows, represented by
 ay-colored fire, and, while the sleeper dreams, a clear soprano
 voice, representing the Cowslip Queen, takes up the strain.

Where the cowslip buds are gay
 Golden fairies hide by day;
 But with Cynthia's mystic train
 We resume our jocund reign.

Tiny fays, by daylight hid
 In the cowslip's yellow lid,
 Walk by night as nobles grand,—
 Kings and queens of Fairy Land.

Welcome Poet, newly crowned.
 Fairy world is Muses' ground.
 While the Christmas glories fall
 Fairies keep their festival.

Higher into air rises the fountain, while through the foliage now shines the Fairy Sun, the Fairy Moon gleams in silver by its side, and, apparently lord of the ascendant, a star of pure white light. A dusky boy, crowned with a chaplet of palm leaves, robed in a starry mantle embroidered with purple and gold and holding in his hand a Nile lily, approaches the poet in his turn, singing in deeper tones and to a more unearthly melody :

By day I sleep where dark and dim
 Great Memnon wakes his morning hymn.
 I saw of old Canopus smile
 Above my lily in the Nile :

I rose, in fairy state, to know
 Why all the stars were chanting so :
 From orb to orb the music rang
 While Fairy World responding sang,

"The Lord of Glory takes His way,
 The sceptre of the world to sway ;
 He shall be born of David's line,
 But rule mankind by right divine.

Now, seeming to descend through a floral pathway, leading from the stars, folding up her radiant wings, and wearing a luminous halo upon the brow, appears one representing the Queen Fairy of the Star of Love ; touching her harp twined with laurel and misletoe ;

Orion swept his tuneful lyre ;
 Arcturus woke the northern choir ;
 And Aldebaran, great and wise,
 Rejoiced to see a planet rise.
 It was no disk of mortal mold,
 But floated, in celestial gold,
 With endless morn the night to gem,—
 And was the Star of Bethlehem !

The fairy nations wide and far,
Who thrill with bliss the morning star,
Beheld a lamb without a stain
Upon a golden altar lain:
From all its mystic veins shone forth
A light that filled the Heavens and earth.
That loving lamb at last became
A lion crowned with vestal flame.

The Lord of Christmas came of old
While fairy songs His birth foretold.
From grove and grot and greenwood tree
They came to bend the lowly knee.
From age to age their gifts they bring
And praise the gracious Christmas King.
His love descends from great to small,
And fairies own him Lord of all.

A fairy sprite sings merrily
For every heart a Christmas glee.
A fairy watchman winds his horn
To rouse the guests for Christmas morn.
The Christmas morn begins to break
And all the fairy folks awake;
And fairy lads a-courting go
And kiss beneath the misletoe.

When Hymen's doors are opened wide
The fairies crown the tender bride;
Her winsome lips, though no one sees,
Are honey-hives for fairy bees.
Still, when the snows of age descend,
The fairy is the good man's friend.
The notes, before the dying eyes,
Are fairies, pointing to the skies!

A distant bell now tolls the midnight, while a choir from some
remote monastery chant the Angelus:

Ave Maria! the night dews are falling.
 Ave Maria! the Angels are calling.
 Silence and sleep fill the earth and the ocean,
 Mortals awake to their midnight devotion.

Not for thy prayers do we call while thou hearest,
 Thou on the earth to thy Lord who wert nearest.
 Oh! for the joy, to thy heart that is given,
 Where thou dost kneel and adore Him in Heaven.

Ave Maria! What glory surprising
 Filled thy wrapt soul, from the sepulchre rising?
 Bearing the burdens of service most lowly,
 Fain would we follow thy path to the Holy.

Slowly the fairy spectacle receded. The fountain disappeared. A pale, silver light, like that of a rising moon, represented the lustre of the natural night.

SHAKESPEARE WAKENING, SOLUS:

The night is better than day. Have these deep shades enchantment in them? This mossy bank hath more wisdom in it than Amadis de Gaul. Wer't not for hose and doublet methinks I were disembodied.

Imagination wakens when we sleep.
 A touch, and we are free. The midnight chimes
 Call us to earth again. I was a guest,
 Methinks, in Cyprus, of the Fairy Queen
 With all my heart-dreams changed to spirits bright
 Making my soul their dulcimer.—'Tis strange!—
 I feast on golden dainties half the night
 Till trencher fare grows base. The bubble earth,—
 What is it? Death but pricks a vein or so;—
 I drop my ashes to unfold my wings.
 And Sleep is Death's bright harbinger, who stands
 In the forecourt of Immortality,
 And prophecies the sunrise.

Here comes Anna.

Enter ANNE HATHAWAY, who speaks :

Thee be a pretty lover, Will. Nine of thee wouldn't make a tailor's goose. A quacking drake hath more spirit in him. Coom in, coom in. If thee means to coort, coort and ha' done with it. Fayther be asleep. Here be cakes and ale. And, Will, don't kiss me. I'll tell thee what. Thee must give up star gazing ; the leech saith it giveth young folks the black ague. Hast thou brought me a gift, Will ? Jack and Joe and Hodge buy their sweethearts fairings. Hodge brought Gillian a red farthingale. Thee hast never brought me a red farthingale.

SHAKSPEARE :

I have brought thee a song, sweetheart.

When hawthorn blooms adorn the May,
And blossoms crown the orchard tree,
Thy true love will not tell thee nay ; —
Then haste the holy man to see,
When wedded birds their songs begin
'Tis time to woo and time to win.

When cherries redden on the boughs,
And from the nests the young birds peer,
He who would win a gentle spouse
Should haste to don the wedding gear.
When birds to feed their young begin
'Tis time to woo and time to win.

When Goodman Thresher plies the flail,
And reapers drink the Harvest Home,
When from the stubble pipes the quail,
And horns of old October foam,
And silver frosts at night begin,
'Tis time to woo and time to win.

When faggots crackle on the hearth
And larders groan with noble cheer ;
When young and old renew their mirth
Let Christmas courtings crown the year.
While advent bells their chime begin
'Tis time to woo and time to win.

ANNE, frowning:

Bob White, the quail, and Robin Redbreast beat thee a singing,
Will. Go to. Wilt thou buy me the farthingale?

SHAKESPEARE:

Buy thee a farthingale? Nay lass, but I'll tell thee how Saint
Cupid gave a maid the go-by that asked for one.

Young Love would once a wooing go!
With gay fourteen his search began:
She neither answered "yes" nor "no,"
But eyed the pictures on her fan.
She peeped at Love and coyly said,
"Let go my hand, thou idle fool,"
Then munched a round of buttered bread,
And idly carolled off to school.

Young Love would once a wooing go!
He kissed a maid in girlhood's prime.
Her crimson cheeks were all a-glow
And both set off for wedlock's clime.
But on the way she changed her mind
And prized a farthingale the more,
And then her buxom self would bind
A 'prentice at the mercer's door.

Young Love would once a wooing go!
A Royal Lady met his quest,
Who bore a rose, in perfect blow,
Above the lilies of her breast.
He vowed her faithful knight to be,
And thrilled to touch her jeweled hand;
Then, convoyed by the Graces three,
She led him safe to Hymen's Land.

ANNE:

Thee be mad, Will! Thee be mad. Will idle songs buy cakes
and ale? This comes of lying abroad of nights when the moon is
at her full, watching the deer. There flies the old gray owl. I'll be
bound thou art mad enough to put an owl into a song.

SHAKESPEARE:

'Too-whit, too-hoo,'—the owlet sings,
He is the ghost of beadsman old;
The winter storm is in his wings
And all his feathers are a-cold.

'Too-whit, too-hoo,'—the horned owl!
He spurned an outcast from his door,
When once he wore a frock and cowl,
And now is doomed for evermore.

YEOMAN HATHAWAY, invisible:

Coom in, wench, coom in, or thee'll be walloped with an oaken staff.

[Exit ANNE.

SHAKESPEARE, solus:

Flesh and blood talketh to flesh and blood. Red lips are June cherries, and cry "come and gather us." Yeoman Hathaway tasted the old dame's mouth when it had pearls within it and sweet breath. The toothless gums mumble now. Doth old age remember when she went to fairings and danced around the May-pole? Doth her crutch remember when it was a lusty bough, brave with blossoms? The holy clerk saith beauty is vain. My eyes are heavy. Honest bank, thou has kept my cloak. Here will I wrap myself again and sleep till cock-crow.

The scene is now transformed. The shrubbery gay with colored lights, elfin music heard in the distance. While the body of the poet seems to recline, wrapt in the cloak, on the bank beyond the fountain, its spirit rises, slowly taking shape and gliding from the form into the Dream World. The screen of shrubbery, removed, reveals a lady's boudoir; a maiden sleeping in the couch beyond purple curtains; a crucifix upon the wall and a missal and rosary beneath it upon a Prie Dieu. The spirit of the maiden, emerging from her sleeping person, crowned with chaplets of rose and myrtle, enrobed in a diaphanous, aerial mantle, glides into sight as if through the hangings. The chamber is filled with a soft, rosy twilight.

LADY:

From the dust that is my shrine,
Dwelling-place and prison,
In a tender dream divine,
I have risen, risen!

While my earthly shadow sleeps
I have passed its portals,
Moving, through the azure deeps,
To the fair immortals.

To my heart a whisper came,—
'Twas an angel's greeting,—
Tranced away the dusty frame,
Stilled the bosom's beating.

Viewless friend, thyself reveal!
Soul, thy shape discover!—
Oh, the boundless bliss I feel;
'Tis my own true lover.

[The shade of SHAKSPEARE enters: the two embrace.]

LADY:

I know thee not by earthly name,
Yet here we meet.
Our spirit owns one common flame;
'Tis sweet: 'tis sweet.

SHAKSPEARE:

I am no youth of mortal mold:
Dust doth the chainless mind infold.
I wander, in my dreams, away,
Where fountains of the Muses play.
For me Orion's gates unbar
And shines and sings the morning star.
Arise my love; we too shall be
One essence in eternity.

The scene changes again, revealing Elysium. The Tragic King seated on a throne of emerald; the nine Muses forming a semi-circle; an altar before the throne with a volume clasped in pearl and gold.

FIRST MUSE:

A youthful pair kneel without, beseeching audience of our monarch. Rising from their bodies during the period allotted to mortal slumber, they wing their way to these sublime retreats.

SECOND MUSE:

Unbar, unbar the gates of gold;
'Tis Shakspeare; one we wait of old.
And, Lo! see imperial Tragedy
Smites the great harp that shakes the sky.

THIRD MUSE:

For him the Queen of wreathed smiles,
Of quaint conceits and subtle wiles,
In starry mantle gemmed with dew,
Hastes from her distant, heavenly blue.

FOURTH MUSE:

He shall be wise in simple things,
And know that fairy queens and kings
Court in the foxglove's airy bell,
And in the true love's bosom dwell.

FIFTH MUSE:

Led by a maid with holy eyes
He seeks the court of destinies;
His heart's pure virgin guides the way,
And in her glance the fairies play.

SIXTH MUSE:

Our monarch rises on his throne;
Ne'er bath his brow so brightly shone
Since Æschylus approached before
From earth's remote Æolian shore.

SEVENTH MUSE :

For bolts, that shot the dappled deer,
 He waits the shafts of fancy here :
 The golden fruit, that Paris found,
 For apples of an earthly ground.

EIGHTH MUSE :

Blow trumpets, blow ! As steps a star,
 Descending from her beamy car,
 Our monarch's queen, sweet Poesy,
 Is welcomed by the Graces three.

NINTH MUSE :

Unbind the page ; unloose the scroll.
 The Poet wins the Muse's goal,
 But Love alone completes the quest,
 And bears them to the Dreamer's breast.

[The shade of SHAKESPEARE appears, led on by the lady.]

SHAKESPEARE :

My gentle love, mine evermore to be
 If, faithful to the skies,
 I win at last an angel's blazonry,—
 I see but through thine eyes.
 My sight is dimmed with overwhelming light ;
 I stand upon the shore
 Where vast Imagination's hand of might
 Yet beckons on before.

LADY :

This is Elysium. I divine
 That here the sacred Muses shine.
 Their tuneful voices whisper cheer ;
 The Drama's Monarch ruleth here.
 A golden scroll is in my hand ;
 Like flowers that blow its leaves expand ;

And now the mighty Ruler says,
'These are the souls of Shakspeare's plays;'
And see, it melts with honied smart,
And mingles with thy mind and heart.

So ended the masque in the winter garden. Shortly afterward a herald appeared, making proclamation that Master William Shakspeare, of the Globe Theatre, Bank-side, invited them to be present at the first acting of his new play, The Christmas Tragedy; the preceding masque having been composed by his dear friend, Master Edmund Spenser. Seated at luxurious ease, the gay and gallant company enjoyed the drama.

THE CHRISTMAS TRAGEDY:

A PLAY; IN FIVE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ:

KING HENRY THE FOURTH.

PRINCE HAL.

FALSTAFF.

BARBOLPH.

POINS.

PISTOL.

The Banished EARL OF WAKEVILLE as a traveler.

ARTHUR, his younger son, imprisoned in a dungeon of Wakeville Castle.

EARL BARNABAS, nephew of the banished Earl and usurper of his honors and estates.

FRIAR LAWRENCE, a depraved Monk.

AMBROSE, Lay Brother, and servant of the Friar.

LUKE TAPSTER, servant at the Dragon of Wantley Inn.

GAMMER BACON, a farmer.

WILL OUTLAW, a killer of the king's deer.

LADY ALICE, Ward of the Earl of Wakeville, beloved by Arthur.

Nurse of Lady Alice.

MAUD, granddaughter of the Earl of Wakeville.

Hostess of the Dragon of Wantley Inn.

JOAN, the bar-maid.

SHADE of Merry Christmas.

FAIRY QUEEN.

CHORUS OF FAIRIES.

Nobles, Courtiers and Retainers.

Villagers, Serving-men, Heralds and Men-at-Arms.



THE CHRISTMAS TRAGEDY.

The scene is laid at Wakeville Castle and Hermitage, the adjacent woodlands, the neighboring Abbey of the Benedictines and the village Hostelry.

TIME:

CHRISTMAS NIGHT AND THE ENSUING MORNING.

PROLOGUE.

'Twas Christmas night, of seasons long ago;
A village priest was nodding o'er his wine;
He rubbed his paunch to hear the wild winds blow,
And said, "Thank God, a jolly fate is mine,
I kiss and I court,
I frolic and sport,
And feast at the cost of the sinner;
I dine from the haunch,
And my pinnacle I launch
In a gallon of sack after dinner."

He heard the wild winds blow,—
The clouds wept out their snow,
The chimney roared, the ivied casement shook,—
Then trolled a merry troll,
And drained the wassail bowl,
While the huge pastry trembled at his look.

The Lord of Christmas came to see
His serving-man of high degree;
The storm was loud, the night was wild,
He took the likeness of a child.

The Friar quaffed the lusty can,
 Then shouted to his serving-man,
 "Haste, bar the door and turn the key;
 Methinks I'll write a homily,
 Which, when I preach, the sinners all
 Upon their graceless knees shall fall,
 And, while they shake with craven fear,
 Pay up the tithings in arrear."

The Friar oped the godly page,
 When, through the ancient hermitage,
 A whisper spoke, in music low,
 "Go forth, thou holy man, for lo!
 An orphan welters in the snow."

Hark, gentles, to our Christmas tale:
 Let none the orphan's doom bewail:
 For lo! the good and right prevail.

ACT FIRST.

SCENE 1.

An ancient hostelry called the Dragon of Wantley. The dining-room set out with Christmas cheer.'

[Enter LUKE TAPSTER.]

LUKE TAPSTER:

I have broached the October, boned the turkey, dressed the spinach, stuffed the conies, spitted the capons and kissed the cook. Here be custards and cream, marmalade and marchpane, comfits and caudle, buttered stock fish to provoke thirst and sack-posset to quench thirst. Out and come again.

There be hurdle races, bull baitings, dog fights, base ball and cudgel playing, all on the green. Alack! Alack! Why do Christmas come but once a year?

I would that all misletoes were one misletoe, all Joans one Joan,

with one mouth for them all, and then all Lukes one Luke, and that me. I'd kiss all Joans in one Joan, on all mouths in one mouth, under all misletoes in one misletoe. Then I'd wipe my lips, because I should be dry, and drain all ale pots in one ale-pot, drinking the health of Merry Christmas, with a hip, hip, burrah!

[Enter JOAN, bar-maid.]

JOAN:

Oh! Tapster, the Friar be come. He took tithes of the sack-posset on the buttary table, snacked on boned turkey in the larder, and oh! Luke, (whispering,) he took tithes on missus' lips behind the pantry door, and chucked her under the chin, vowing, the while, that she looked brave as a gilliflower in her starched ruff and crimson farthingale. You shan't take tithes, though. Wait till you have a crown bald as a winter cabbage and carry a mass-book in your hand and a pouch of rose nobles at the girdle. Off Tapster. At thy peril! Do it an' thou darest. (Luke kisses Joan.)

[Exit TAPSTER and bar-maid.]

[Enter FRIAR.]

FRIAR, solus:

Gammer Bacon is in arrears one tithe pig since last Martinmas. He hath robbed the altar of chines and chitlings. The world groweth abominable like a frosted medlar. The laborer is worthy of his hire. What would they do without the Friar? I shave my crown, wear sackcloth over my lambs' wool doublet and abstain from flesh on Fridays. Capon is not flesh, but fowl; turbot not flesh, but water fish; turtle not flesh, but land fish. Thus do I mortify myself, as saith the Breviary. Yet who rewardeth the priest? When the pullets lay, the tenth egg is tithes. Ye sinners, the tithe eggs that ye defraud the altar of, when they grow up to be cocklings, will crow against you to the crack of doom.

Master Thomas Aquinas thinketh that Saint Beelzebub will soon blow his trumpet for the last judgment. Verily, if the world cometh to an end, the eggs which I should have roasted will see many a sinner in the frying pan. Last Whitsuntide was a year I church'd the old Squire's madam: she, with a "here's for thee, priest," pressed into my palm a rose noble: where are the other nine!

With incredible pains I journeyed to the end of the parish that Dame Margery's little wench might be christened. She sent up six capons and a runlet of canary. Six capons; that's two for a meal, breakfast, dinner and ere supper; one day's provender; and, in the year, there are,—let me remember,—two hundred and sixty-seven days: thus also runneth the Breviary. It is a wicked world.

The mass preserveth the mile-stone, and here Christmas hath come again. After matins there will be a homily. This I made last night with a brave text from the Maccabees. Let me rehearse it. But recollection injureth the memory when the stomach cries 'cup-board' and the gullet is dry as a funnel. What have we here?

[Approaches the table and commences tasting.]

Clouts and cream. Marchpane. Sack-poeset. A trifle too much spice in that sack; it lacketh the flavor of a little burnt Muscovado. Buttered stockfish. Now stockfish without salt provoketh drought: that is because theirs is a natural brine, they being sea fish; but your trout, your turbot, your salmon,—these all must be born and bred in fresh water. It stands to reason, for they need to be salted. Well argued, Friar; now for thy homily. Let me leave the text and come to the application. The text declareth the knightly deeds of Judas Maccabeus in the time of the first Crusades. The application belongeth to the tithes.

[Enter TAPSTER.]

TAPSTER:

Missus says, may it please your reverence, that after mass there will be a private dinner in the brown room, if an thou'lt come.

[Exit TAPSTER.]

FRIAR, soliloquises.

Too great a burden for one Friar. Can I shrive all the maids, bless all the children, call in the tithes and eat the dinners of the parish all in one day, and that Christmas? Be chary of thy favors, Friar; dine not without due provocation. Approach the Grange or the hostelry with thy nose against the wind, to see that it be no meagre day, but that they ruffle it bravely with a haunch of venison on the spit, or, to say the least, a roasted goose or so. A spare diet provoketh melancholy, causeth ill dreams and giveth place for

'Sathanna. I'll not dine at the hostelry. The Baron's larder affordeth more gentle cheer.

SCENE 2.

WAKEFIELD HERMITAGE.

An antique chamber fitted up as the dining-room of a monk. The remains of supper on the table. The Breviary, flanked by a bowl of hippocras and drinking horns. The Friar, reclining in a large arm-chair, wiping his mouth after the repast.

FRIAR, solus:

St. Lawrence was broiled upon coals; St. Patrick drowned in crossing the Jordan; St. Jezebel devoured by dogs, and St. Nebuchadnezzar roasted in a burning, fiery furnace. Pictures stand for them on the walls in Durham cathedral. There be Kings in purgatory, waiting for their deliverance; King Arthur and his knights, and cavaliers of the Philistines, whom King Saul killed at the famous tournament before the walls of Gaza, blowing off their heads with matchlocks, and spitting them on arrows three ells long. There be Saracenic giants, some with two heads, and others with seven toes on each foot and seven fingers on each hand, all in a row, impaled before the Grand Turk's seraglio, for supping on roasted pork the day before Easter. There be Tapsters at inns who must not drink the ale they draw for others; and butlers, who carve the haunch at the king's table for the Barons, till the fat be sliced away, without daring to hide a morsel for their own trencher service. These be thine examples O, Friar! I faint because of the wilderness, as saith St. Herod in his lamentations. I have fasted on quails like Moses in the desert, and confessed the serving-men when the maids went away unshrived. Friar! Friar! wilt thou ever be a bishop? Much fasting maketh the throat parch till drought produces hunger. I eat to mortify mine appetite, and quench thirst that I may put my tears in my bottle, as saith the Breviary. Your gentle, when he hath eaten himself through the body of a slain beeve, is no more a gentle but a fly. Yet your poor priest eateth himself through the parish yearly, and soareth no higher than to be a canon, save with incredible mortifications. It's an ill-made world. Var-

lets thrive while honest men hunger in lentan fastings. When shall I be a bishop?

[Enter AMBROSE, a hempen girdle round his waist: eyeing wistfully the cheer.]

FRIAR:

Ambrose, lock up the pastry and the ranlet. The cold capon will do to break my fast. Leave the hippocras with the comfits and the pippins. 'Tis good to mortify the deeds of the flesh. Thou didst look askance at the hostess of the inn when she came to mass in her new farthingale. For this I enjoin thee penance. Thy supper will be a trencher of dried peas and a horn of fair water.

[Exit AMBROSE.]

[The FRIAR sinks into a doze, from which he startles in a moment.]

FRIAR:

Who calls me? Methought I heard a voice crying, "Two poor travelers perish in the forest glades; an old man and his little granddaughter." Bless me!

[The FRIAR yawns and sleeps again, while the apartment is lit with a soft, rosy light, and Fairies are heard singing in the distance.]

[Enter the FAIRY QUEEN, touching the Monk, still sleeping, with her wand and singing:]

Wake, beadsman, wake, for Christ's sweet sake,
The Fairy music follow.
The night is wild, a tender child
Dies in the woodland hollow.
Wake, beadsman, wake,
For Christ's sweet sake.

She lieth low; the drifted snow
Makes dreary cold the hollow.
Thy dreams forsake, for Christ's sweet sake.
Thy Master leads thee! Follow.
Wake, beadsman, wake,
For Christ's sweet sake.

[The FAIRY QUEEN disappears. The FRIAR wakes again, yawning.]

FRIAR:

Too much spice in the hippocras. It provoketh dreams. However, I'll mortify my appetite and afflict my body by another draught. Strange that I should hear voices telling me that travelers are dying in the snow. Friars are not vowed to take in vagrants, when at their mortifications after curfew toll.

[The FRIAR dozes again. Enter a radiant apparition representing the Spirit of Merry Christmas, singing,

The weary world was all forlorn
Upon the night when I was born.
From star to star a whisper ran
Of peace and love to mortal man.
The angels smote their harps of gold;
Their Lord's descent that music told;
And, when their gladness touched the earth,
My shadow trembled into birth.

My name is Peace; where'er I go
I sheathe the sword and loose the bow.
My name is Plenty; where I tread
I bring the poor man ale and bread.
My name is Gladness, in my path
The lads rejoice, the lasses laugh:
My name is Mercy, and I bring
A message now from Mercy's King.

Wake beadsman, wake, the night is cold;
A maiden calls thee from the mold.
Beside her dies an aged sire;
Stir up for them thy Christmas fire.
Adorn the board with festive cheer,
And bid thy guests a welcome here.
Up, sluggard, ere thy Master say,
"Rise, caitiff, to the judgment day,"

[The FRIAR wakes, while the vision disappears.]

FRIAR, soliloquises:

To dream of poor travelers, as saith St. Paracelsus, who was one of the wise men of Chaldea, must be interpreted by contraries. I dreamed that I saw two wayfarers struggling against the sleet, and that a voice said, "Up, Friar, bring out the uncut pasty; brew a sack posset, put fresh faggots on the fire and give them welcome." St. Paracelsus was a wise man. This dream denoteth that there's a rich man, perhaps an Earl, riding with his daughter on white palfreys; that's the significance of the snow. They will come to me and say, "Friar, your cheer needs mending." Then I shall be promoted, by Court favor, to be a Bishop; that's the meaning of the pasty. The King after that will set me on the bench, to try the Lollards for making paction with Sathanas, inventing a language which they call Greek, and saying mass in the vulgar tongue. I'll have them burnt;—that's the meaning of the fire. As for the judgment, that signifies that the Pope and St. Peter will hear of it and say "Send him a scarlet gown."

SCENE 8.

A woodland hollow, surrounded by ancient trees; the ground covered with fallen snow. A traveler lying beneath an oak with a child wrapt in his cloak. Time, Christmas night. The scene, at first dark, is gradually illumined by the rosy, fairy light. Fairies, invisible, are heard singing,

Beyond the copse-wood dwells a priest,
Carousing at his Christmas feast;
Rise, traveler, arise, for, lo!
The Fairies guide thee through the snow.

[The CHILD speaks, still wrapt within the folds of the cloak:

Hear the music, grandpa. The fairies have come to guide us safely through the woods.

TRAVELER:

Hush, child, hush! it is the wind.

[FAIRY VOICES, mingled apparently with the wailings of the blast, singing,

The Fairy Queen has come to be
A pilot through the stormy wild;
Rise, traveler, to follow me,
And trust the vision of the child.

[The child, still wrapt in the cloak:

Oh, grandpapa! I see a beautiful lady crowned with stars. Her wings are like those of a million of summer butterflies all in one. She glides in the air, singing that we must follow her.

TRAVELER:

Hush, child. You behold the Will-o'-the-Wisp. We'll try to weather the storm till morning. My old limbs are almost giving out. Nestle closer in the mantle. Sleep daughter. Sleep thee, pretty babe and rest.

[The TRAVELER rises and appears now as an aged man facing the blast.]

TRAVELER:

The dying year is in his dotage now,
And wanders in this wilderness, forlorn,
While all the angry clouds make face at him,
And call him "greybeard, pauper, homeless knave."
A weak old man, abandoned of all friends,
Beneath the clouded pent-house of his brows
Misfortune sits, and gazes on her own
Despairing image in his sunless eyes,
Like some black Night witch by a midnight pool.—
The ice-drops, glimmering on these aged trees,
Seem, by the fitful, intermittent moon,
Like frozen tear-drops on a dead man's face.
The howling winds go tearing o'er the moors,
Scourged by the knotted whips of frost and hail,
Or whimper sadly, like some aged hound,
Dying of hunger at a stranger's doors.—
Aye, Guy De Wakeville, make thy shrift to-night.

Old Death, who fled thee on the battle field
Has turned to face; against thy naked breast
He rides full tilt, scorning so weak a prey.—

Ye burning stars, which are God's messengers,
Pacing your nightly rounds about His throne,
Ye have gazed on through Engeddi's palms
By fountains in the Syrian wilderness.
Peer, in bright vision, through these sable clouds,
That I may see your face once more and die.—
I babble.

Oh! the cony hath his cloak;
The dormouse feedeth on his winter store;
But in my gray-haired honor I do stand,
Bereft of lands, name, titles.

I have come
Thus far, a banished man, from foreign shores,
To plead my own good cause at the king's feet,
But Death o'ertakes me, ere the work is done.

[After pacing to and fro during the soliloquy, as if overcome by frost,
the traveler wraps the child closer in the mantle, clasps her to his
arms and continues, sinking at its close into a stupor.]

Sleep, Maud! thy grandsire's arms shall shield thee yet
A little longer from the biting storm:
Forget thyself in rest that ends in death:
In thee the river of our blood doth end,
And mounts, in thy pure essence, to the skies.
But hark! who comes this way?

My senses fail;
'Twas but a wan cloud driving past the moon,—
A shadow. There it comes again, and now
Most like a saintly nun whom Heaven allows
To float above a dying palmer's trance.—
My senses mock me,—'tis a snow reef driven
Across the moorlands.

Hark! those silver bells!
Methinks I am a gallant youth once more.—

THE CHRISTMAS TRAGEDY.

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Nay, sleep, begone. I will not sleep, till death
Splinters his frosty lance through heart and brain.—
Ho, comrades! smite the caitiff Mahounds down.—
Hush! is the battle o'er? the foeman fled?
Surely I am in my old father's hall:
The faggots crackle in the winter fire.—
Nay, this is fancy. Sleep, avaunt thee!

Now

Methinks I rise into a wondrous dream.
The gloomy world is all a paradise
And aged War hath, from his unused shield,
Forged a bright chariot for sweet Peace, the child,
Who, lifting to bright heaven his ancient blade,
Draws the swift lightning to its rapid wheels.
Upon the floating bosom of the seas
The water weeds have grown to blossomed Isles,
Which, by the South wind's gentle motion driven,
Float, populous with glorious nations all
With bodies freed from baser elements
And kin to fire and ether and the stars.
All the great globe is like a rosy fruit
Pendant upon some blooming Eden tree;
And Summer fans the orb with zephyr's wing.
All heats are tempered from their fierce extremes;
Spring builds her pleasure-house at either pole.
The Afric' dark hath won a golden hue,
And the swarth Ethiopian changed his skin,
Whose dusky spots are bright as any star.
The glowing air-ships roll above the clouds,
And floral isles, with palaces of light,
Shaped in bright colors like the morning mist,
Yet peopled by the gentlest of mankind,
Move in the windy spaces of the air.
Now in the east appears a double sun.
High in mid-air the sportive children play,
Or dance like nymphs upon the crystal sea.
Creation is sublimed and glorified:—
I float away through endless years of peace.

[The SHADE OF CHRISTMAS appears, an apparition in radiant apparel; sings:

The child is wiser than the man
To follow where the fairies plan.
God's love descends from great to small;
They hear the Lord of Christmas call;
And beckon, from the stormy wild,
To save the pilgrim and the child.

[The TRAVELER rises, shakes the snow from his doublet, and speaks
in a low voice :

TRAVELER :

Surely, I heard some one calling me. Little Maud, what see'st thou ?

CHILD :

Oh, grandpapa ! there is a man like one of the pictures in the Breviary. His doublet shines full of stars, as if angels had made holes in it to let the glory through. He carries a little lamb in his breast.

[The TRAVELER rises, making the sign of the cross and muttering an Ave for protection against evil spirits. The SHADE OF CHRISTMAS brightens and sings gleefully :

Spirits of bale
Flicker and pale
At the sign of the holy rood,
But spirits of light
Appear in the night.
Come follow me out of the wood ;
Come follow me out of the wood.

[The curtain drops upon the TRAVELER feebly staggering from the hollow, bearing the child in his arms, while the SHADE OF CHRISTMAS leads the way.

ACT SECOND.

SCENE 1.

Interior and exterior of the Hermitage. The FRIAR sitting before the fire, with points untrussed and a scarlet sleeping cap upon his head, sipping from a small silver tankard, and singing,

Oh ! ale is good for serving-men
And maids of low degree ;
Canary sack with gentlemen
And ladies doth agree ;
But I, with night-cap on my head,
Before I do recline,
My soul, on goodly capons fed,
Delight with elder wine.

Hot caudle into horns is poured
To greet the new-born heir.
Where knights and nobles grace the board
They hippocras prepare.
With sprigs of wormwood stir the purl,
It is no drink of mine.
Were I a Bishop or an Earl
I'd sleep on elder wine.

[The exterior of the Hermitage discovers a porch and the ground white with snow. The SHADE OF CHRISTMAS appears, lighting the way and guiding the pilgrim, still bearing in his arms the child. Feebly approaching, the ancient deposits his burden in the porch, knocks lustily, and, receiving no answer, smites the panels again and again. FRIAR within approaches the casement.

FRIAR, sotto voce :

It's woundily cold. St. Barnabas is a cunning leech. He declareth that chills after elder wine createth lumbago. I'll even finish my tankard. Let them wait and blow their fingers.

[The TRAVELER now beats the panels and shakes the door.]

FRIAR;

I'll parley with them. Ho, without! What would ye have?

TRAVELER:

Shelter, for the sake of charity.

FRIAR, personating a Lay Brother:

This be the Friar's house. The holy man is at his Aves, and leaveth word that none shall disturb him till cock-crow.

TRAVELER:

Shelter, for the sake of God. We are perishing. I have a little lass with me.

FRIAR:

The holy man hath never suffered a wench within the Hermitage. He sanctifieth the door-porch, as saith St. Pharaoh. This be penance night; he keepeth it in sackcloth to drive away Sathanas and the great plague. There is an ale-house a short league further.

TRAVELER, imploringly:

Rouse the holy man and beg him to give us shelter for Christ's sake. Our scrip is lost in the wood and we have no pence left.

FRIAR, angrily:

Bang no more at the door. Make haste. Vanish. The Friar cometh from his devotions to curse you by bell, book and candle.

[The SHADE OF CHRISTMAS appears, beckoning the TRAVELER, who moves away.]

SCENE 2.

Interior of the Hermitage as before. The FRIAR discovered draining the tankard; holding a lighted taper as if about to retire. The exterior shows a sturdy serving-man drawing near, bearing fitches of bacon and a ham; knocking at the door; the FRIAR moves to the casement, peering cautiously forth.

FRIAR :

Who seeketh the holy man after vespers ?

SERVING-MAN :

Goodman Hodge, with the tithe bacon.

FRIAR :

Goodman Hodge, with the tithe bacon, thou hast stopped to carouse at the ale-house by the way. Prithee, leave the bacon with Brother Ambrose, who will give thee quittance, at the buttery hatch. I appoint thee to bring four capons as penance for stopping to carouse at the ale-house on Christmas night. Fatten them on barley, Goodman Hodge.

[GOODMAN HODGE disappears. A tapping is heard at the pane of the casement. The FRIAR resumes his position. Without appears OUTLAW clad in Lincoln Green.

OUTLAW :

Ho, Friar ! here is cheer.

FRIAR :

Is that thee, Will Outlaw ? and what wouldst thou have ?

OUTLAW :

We killed a hart of grease in the king's chase. An thou wilt give me absolution for kissing Gammer Bacon's Cicely, thou shalt have the haunch, Friar.

[The FRIAR opens the door ; OUTLAW enters, bearing the haunch.]

FRIAR :

" Venison covereth a multitude of sins," as saith the Breviary.

ACT THIRD.

SCENE 1.

The Dragon of Wantley Inn. A rustic merry-making. Villagers dancing a reel in the keeping room. MARK TAPSTER answering calls for ale. In the rear scene through doors, revellers at table; FALSTAFF, BARDOLF, PISTOL and PRINCE HAL, the hostess serving them, in red farthingale and starched ruff. They leave the feast and join the dancers, FALSTAFF leading out the Landlady.

FALSTAFF:

Oh! that sack. My gravity and wisdom put brains in my heels, streaming from the overplus. My feet mount as if they scorned the floor. There are ears in mine ankles and whiskers at the toes. My heart, as becometh the lightness of its youth, ascends into the brain. I behold forty Falstoffs, each dancing with forty hostesses. I tell thee, Hal, had thy father but raised a red farthingale for his banner, we had marched after it to the Antipodes and scaled the walls.

[Enter Courtier in disguise. Draws PRINCE HAL aside and whispers:

COURTIER:

Prince, thy father, the King, masks himself in a gray doublet wearing in his cap a cockrel's feather over the right ear. Hearing that thou, Falstaff and the rest are at loose ways, he leaveth the Abbey of the Benedictines, where he is entertained upon his progress, and is now approaching; therefore beware.

[Enter the King disguised, accompanied by Lords of the Court attired as serving-men. PRINCE HAL stands apart.]

BARDOLF, addressing FALSTAFF:

What ho, Fat Jack, thou grave of conies, thou posset bottle, there is a Friar near at hand, whom report saith can drink more sack at a sitting than thou.

FALSTAFF:

Treason! treason! King Henry is lord of knights, barons and

earls, ruling over the meat of England; but Falstaff is monarch of black jacks, runlets, drinking flasks, horns, pottles and Venice glasses. I defy thee to produce this shaveling. Here be four tankards, one for England, one for Scotland, one for Wales, and this, with the fillee, for France. Each holdeth a quart or more. He who drinketh them without more space between each than sufficeth to kiss the hostess, shall be Grand Soldan of all topers. He who doth not shall ride the sign-post. Ho, traitor! Display standards; unfurl the royal farthingale; bid the Monk to our revels. He shall drain the four pottles or ride the sign-post before cock-crow.

PRINCE HAL:

Varlets silence, there is a beating at the door.

[Enter TRAVELER, bearing a child.]

TRAVELER:

Make way, masters. I verily fear my Maud is frozen dead.

[The sound of a trencher beaten in an adjoining room is heard, and the rustics, two-and-two, march to supper, the other parties remaining on the stage. The TRAVELER shakes the snow from his garments, the King drawing nigh and eyeing him intently. The maid begins to revive, rubbing her eyes and winking. Seeing the King close at hand, she smiles and puts out her arms.]

MAUD:

Grandpapa, you are tired: let me go to this good man.

[The King pauses, as if irresolute, then draws an oaken settle to the fire and takes her on his knee.

SCENE 2.

[The same. In the background, beside the chimney-corner, the child on the King's knee, prattling with him. Opposite, the TRAVELER, in a deep sleep. In the foreground, FALSTAFF and his com-

panions. In their midst the FRIAR, FALSTAFF assuming a dignified air and acting the monarch.

FRIAR, with a low obeisance:

Since St. Barnabas day was a twelvemonth, saving your greatnesses presence, I have never beheld so majestic a countenance. What would your greatness have? I stand commanded.

FALSTAFF:

Thus far have we come on our royal progress. The Bishop of St. Swithins hath fallen from his mule and is dying of the quinsy. We have sent for thee to propound four questions, which, an thou answerest wisely, shall go far to make a man of thee. The first is, Canst thou brew sack-posset? If so, well. The second is, Art thou qualified to drink sack-posset? If so, better. The third is, Hast thou discretion to brew sack-posset after thou hast drank sack-posset? If so, thou comest nigh the mark. Then cometh the fourth. Dost thou rise to the height of draining four pottles of sack and confessing the hostess afterward?

PRINCE HAL, approaching:

Falstaff, the King's here; mend thy manners. Bid the varlets keep silence.

[The revellers leave the apartment. The TRAVELER still remaining asleep in the chimney-corner and the King alone with PRINCE HAL and the little maid.

KING HENRY, kissing the child:

Thou wert lost in the snow then; what next?

MAUD:

Grandpapa spake, "It's a weary night and the way is lost. Wrap thyself closely in the cloak, lass. Thou mayest weather the storm till morning. Then we heard the fairies singing, but grandpapa said I dreamed. Soon it came nearer and louder, but grandpapa called it the wind. Then appeared a shining lady, but grandpapa called her the Will o' the Wisp. Then came a man made of light, and when grandpapa crossed himself and said his Ave, the man

grew brighter and he led us out of the wood to the door of a godly man. Then grandpapa beat at the porch and the round man who has just gone in to the supper came to the casement and said that the Friar was praying to keep off Sathanas and the great plague, and must not be disturbed. Grandpapa thumped again, but he replied that the holy monk never let a lass over the threshold. Then, when grandpapa called for shelter a third time, he bade us begone, for the priest was coming to curse us with bell, book and candle.

KING HENRY :

What did Christmas after this ?

MAUD :

He bade us rest by the hedge and see what the Friar would do. First came a man with fitches of bacon, and the holy man gave him a penance for stopping at the ale-house on the way. Then came a varlet tapping at the casement, and saying that he had been among the King's deer and killed a hart of grease, and that the haunch was for the Friar, so the door opened and the varlet went in.

KING, in a low voice :

How did Christmas lead thee, then, little lass ?

MAUD :

He went before us, singing :

When thou to Henry shall complain,
The Earl shall find his own again.

See ! there he stands now, but his shining cloak is put off and he smiles out of the shadow.

SCENE 3.

SUPPER ROOM OF THE DRAGON OF WANTLEY: MERRY-MAKERS AT
TABLE.

FALSTAFF :

What ho, Poins, harkee. Wisdom is a flea, horn of the nuptials

of father Ale-pot and mother Mead. Canary is his godfather. They church him on Burgundy, and, afterward, he liveth on red man-juice for a diet. I will put this flea in thine ear, Poina. With a hop, skip and a jump, he leaps from John O'Groat's to the land's end. To-day he is in Trezibond and to-morrow in Cathay. He sups to-night with Madame, the Queen of France, on a bed of lilies, and to-morrow taps a vein for Prester John. He is Sir Oracle. Harkee, pot companions all, let Falstaff's flea prophecy.

There shall be a time when men shall ride after tea-kettles on the King's highway; and ships shall be propelled by cart wheels from Calais to Dover. They shall find islands in those times whereof the rocks have been made by water beetles. There shall be trees on some bearing filberts shaped like a man's head, each holding white meat like that of chicken and a pint stoup or so of Canary wine; then man shall eat and drink, and tan himself a pair of hozen out of the tree's hide for leather, and house himself under it for winter weather. The knights and barons of some of these islands shall feast on fat abbots, trussing them on a spit as we do larks and capons, and frying them in their own grease. There shall be gilded cockrels on the steeples which shall show the way the wind blows; and they shall set fire to stones, dug out of mother earth's vexed entrails, to light the streets withall. Bear-baitings shall come to an end and gooseberries grow to weigh a rose noble. They shall make ale without hops and Malvoisie that never smelt of vineyards. Clowns shall learn to read like any clerk, barons write their own names, kings set the example of dining at fowl-roost and Jews sit in Parliament. Aldermen shall wrap themselves in cold clouts and sit in washbasins to cure the tertian ague. There shall be no Moors in Spain. Bishops shall keep fastings on the sirloin. Men shall burn villainous weeds under their noses, sucking the smoke therefrom as a child doth pull at the nipple and smelling at it as if it were a bed of daisies. There shall be maids in body like the wasp, knights who never bestrode a charger, and men at arms with not a helmet in whole battallions, who shall kill the king's enemies three furlongs off with leaden pellets no bigger than a pea. Ho, gentles! If this wisdom be in the flea's nippers what shall come from the jewel in the frog's head!

Then shall approach a day when men shall sail the high seas in boiling pots made of iron or baser metal. They shall hug the wind,

as if it wore a kerchief and a stomacher. In some parts there shall be fiddlers and in others cooks and butlers, who shall fry and roast and boil and stew and bake and lard and stuff and disembowel from morning till night. Sail bravely, dinner pot! thou shalt have a breast like a duck, a body like a long ale-cask, and propel thy way through the ocean by means of an anger revolving in thy nether parts. There shall be crying and cuddling, dicing and drinking, counting of money and courting of maids; there shall be fiddlings and flirtings, retchings and reasonings, dancings and dining, all at the same time, without disturbance of each other. Bravo kettle! In one corner shall stand an ale-house, where every kind of liquor hath its separate spiggot; in another shall hang out a barber's basin, with three blackamoors in a row curling hair, frizzling wigs, trimming beards and anointing moustaches, smelling all the while of lavender, and crying "lather, more lather!" In one place shall be five hundred cots all in a row, swinging like the pendulums of clocks, with fat men therein for the balls, and this shall be the common dormitory, whereof the snoring at night shall be in one great sound like a bull's bellow. They shall take brazen cymbals, beaten by idol-priests in the land of Prester John, to rouse them up for pot-luck, and each shall break his fast on manchets baked fresh while he was donning his doublet and trussing his points.

Some men shall be scraped clean of beard each day with incredible pains as if they were fitches of bacon; others shall leave no more beard upon their faces than suffices to form the image of a double mutton chop. There shall be wise men in those days, the drainage of whose brains shall drizzle into deal-tables, which, when thou shalt propound a question, will answer thee, some twirling meanwhile on one leg, others dancing in the air by their own proper motion. They shall discover the Satyr Isles and bring home satyrs, some green as if they fed on pea-cods, with flexible tails, whereby they hang from tree tops, and swing with their heads downward, growing wise thereby.

Then shall be bran-new preachments, and women-friars, with dancing tables for a pinnacle of elevation, shall propound that of this species was Adam's grandfather, who, drawing up his tail into the spinal marrow, caused thereby excess of brain, and so, from the quintessence of the fatness, refined the animal spirits, which, mounting into the skull, became man's proper reason. In their preach-

ments some shall say what sin is and what sin is not ; sin being ale, beef and the psalter ; not sin being for each man to take his neighbor's wife.

There shall be parsons who take no tithes, aldermen who eat no venison, and learned leeches who draw no blood. There shall be Lollards, clothed in drab, who kiss with a "yea, verily," and sit in conventicles in long rows, wearing each a broad beaver wrought of felt without a feather. Men shall make wood to sink and iron to swim. They shall hatch poultry from the shells without dame parlet ; and grow the salad from its seed while the fowl is being roasted and the pullet laying the egg that is to dress it withal. They shall drink iron to promote digestion and wear boots that shed water and yet are made of tree milk. In those days the King of England shall make his lion's roar be heard as far as the palace of the Queen of Sheba. The Ottomites shall obey him and the King of Cathay send gifts, lest his palace be battered about his ears. There shall be learned blacksmiths who know all languages ; and men of the tribe of Nebuchadnezzar, eschewing beef and mutton and wearing long beards, who map out their heads as Ptolemy doth the constellations ; proving that man's wit liveth not in his stomach, and making themselves water-troughs through-out the body wherein they plant their food of green herbs like cresses in a running stream.

After this shall canary wine flow on every householder's table, and every honest trencher-man find ample provender of beef and bread. Wisdom runneth dry. Ho, Tapster ! fill the silver tankard with the lilies on it, and see thou make no abatement of the proper quart. Whet thy whistle, sweet canary, first wipe thy bill, then chirrup. Whistle, plover. Sing, cock-robin, ere I cover thee with leaves.

PRINCE HAL, having entered, sings :

Had I to drink for Christmas week,
I would begin with Monday,
And feed the roses on my cheek
With goblets of Burgundy.

FALSTAFF :

Thee drink Burgundy, Hal ! Brew lambs' wool in a silver thim-

ble and stir it with a sprig of rosemary. Burgundy is a drink for master graduates, M. A., Masters of ale pots. Flavor thy delicate complexion with something of milder vintage. Burgundy hath one fault; it rubies the nose, which, looking in the tankard, smelleth the grape and crimsons for shame at his own greediness.

PRINCE HAL:

On Tuesday I would don my best
To woo the county's daughter;
A tender flame should be confest
On malvoisie and water.

FALSTAFF:

Weak drinks make pale faced courtings, Hal. Replenish thyself with mighty ale if thou wouldst woo a widow who admireth spirit and a brave complexion. If thou wouldst be a lover of tender maids in their non-age, pen sonnets to the moon, full of doleful suitors who drowned themselves beneath the willow. Youthful lovers affect melancholy. A windy drink, provoking spleen, will help thee in the sighing case. Take perry, Hal, take perry, so that the pears be not over ripe; or cider of last November was a year, made of crabs and smacking of verjuice; then thou shalt do the tragic. For thy verses, Hal, I will help thee to a madrigal, which thou shalt send to thy inamorata, nicely tucked up in a baker's pie to cheat her father. When the pie is opened at her lunch she shall say to the waiting-maid, "Fetch me my pouncet box; it is in the oaken parlor." Then she shall take thy madrigal out of the pie and hide it in Cupid's jewel-casket, anugly concealed within a stomacher. Wilt thou have it now?

Fair damsel, in these sombre shades reclining,
Mourneth thy Strephon, for his Daphne pining.
He twines his oaten pipe with sighing rushes,
And vents his sorrow in melodious gushes.

Ah, Hal! for all my nose saith "Burgundy," my belt concealeth not the heart of a porcupine. Hal, I will confess to thee, I love a maid, and this madrigal did I send to her incontinently, without her father's knowledge, making league with the pastry cook. I sent it

in a turn-over, marked as a present for her own private delectation. Thereat she encouraged my suit, with a message that the pie was good, but the spice within it super-excellent. Thou shalt have the rest of the madrigal.

Thou hearest me at night when brooks are weeping;
I watch thee in thy dainty glass a-peeping,—
In fancy only,—then the night-shades cover
The languid breast of thy despairing lover.

She is a prize, Hal! her father is a master-vintner in the fleet. He hath galleons of sack and dealeth hugely with the Portingales. Hal, were I a tankard filled with Malvoisie she might drink me. Were I one huge loaf of Muscovado she might eat me afterward. Were I a farthingale she might wear me. Be true man, Hal, betray not counsel, else thou art foresworn. When we are married, first she shall warm the sack and then my night-cap. She shall rouse me in the morning, saying, "Falstaff, up; it is time for thee to be thirsty." Then I will rise on sack-posset. She is a brave lass; her father will grow old, and he shall say to me, "Falstaff, son Falstaff, thou art a sober youth: men have belied thee, son Falstaff. Since thou hast turned thy back on Prince Hal, who led thee astray, thy discretion bloweth like a tulip. Therefore I will trust thee with the keys of my wine-vault." Behold the western sun, how he groweth round and mellow, sitting like Bacchus a-stride the lazy pacing clouds, whose water-drops are spicy and vinous, and turn to royal vintage. I will be the sun, and the skies of tippie shall be full of Muscadine, which shall, from the reflection of my nose, grow bright like Venice glasses when they broach the oldest cask. I'll rise in the morning like Phœbus, and shine upon my galleons of sack, as yon luminary shineth upon the sea. Sing no more, Hal. Spoil not my madrigal with any doggerel of thine own.

PRINCE HAL:

A Wine-pot would a-courting go
From Saturday to Monday:
His monstrous nose was all a-glow
With Sherris and Burgundy.

He saw an Ale-flask on his way
And sang to it a sonnet;
He took the foam that on it lay
To be a Flemish bonnet.

A Wine-pot would a-courting go,
And found a leathern pottle,
And on his knees, with much ado,
He fell to kiss the bottle.

They called him "toper" where he lay,
With vineyard juice o'er-laden,
And this was Falstaff's wedding day,
And this the Vintner's maiden.

(The FRIAR enters, supported by the LANDLADY and SERVING-MAN, and approaches the supper table, bearing four tankards on a salver. A place is made for him at FALSTAFF's right hand; the LANDLADY on the left.)

FRIAR rises with the first of the tankards.

FALSTAFF:

Bravo, Friar, bravo! We will not overlook thee. Canst thou quaver as well as drink?

FRIAR, sings:

Let Christmas come but once a year
To serving-men and others;
There is no lack of festive cheer
For St. Ambrosio's brothers.
To shrive the maids and tithe the swine
I yield to no man here;
For Friars, at their elder wine,
'Tis Christmas all the year.

Let Paynims burn and Lollards roast,—
No Christmas but discovers
The Friar dining at his post
With Saint Ambrosio's brothers.

Let vagrants wait, beyond the gate ;—
We'll all grow mellow here,
And celebrate, in jolly state,
Our Christmas all the year.

[FRIAR, setting down the first tankard, rises with the second.

FALSTAFF :

Nay, not so fast. Thou drinkest for thine own delectation ; thou singest for ours. Wash down the pottle with a stave.

FRIAR sings :

Of all the saints, by book and bell,
I most admire St. Jezebel.
Her vineyard ran with choice Canary ;
'Tis written in the Breviary.

FALSTAFF :

Nay, Friar ! Thou art not perfect. Saint Jezebel was a witch whom King Herod had burned for inventing Greek letters.

FRIAR sings :

Of anchorites and hermits pious
I most admire St. Ananias ;
He sold in haste his only cottage
To buy the poor Crusaders pottage.

[All applaud, while the FRIAR lifts the third tankard.]

FALSTAFF :

Change thy measure, dormouse, if thou wouldst be a bishop.
Ruffle thy feathers bravely. Crow cockerel.

FRIAR sings :

Cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo.
When the posset burneth blue
Evil sprites thy path pursue :
Cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo.

Cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo.

When the sack agrees with you
Brew and drain a posset new.
Cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo.

Cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo.

We the dun deer will pursue,
Till we kill a hart or two.
Cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo.

Cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo.

When the village partlets coo
They in penance all shall rue.
Cock-a-doodle-doodle-doo.

FALSTAFF :

Friar, wert thou a man before thou wert a friar, or a friar before thou wert a man? Confess upon thy Breviary. If thou wert a man before thou wert a friar, wert thou not crossed in love? Did not Jonas Sniggins, the village joiner, despoil thee of thy true love? Speak. Nay, blush not, we have all been lovers here. Unbosom thyself, friar. We promote no man who hath not been crossed in love. Here be Hal. He loved a county's daughter: she played him fair and false; he adventured to her window on a silken ladder, and was left midway between mother earth and Jupiter, swinging from a beam of the turret, with three bull-dogs sniffing at him from below and a caitiff father aiming at him with matchlocks from the casement, till, in the morning, when, having hoisted him to the balcony, his true love turned out to be a serving-man in disguise, who greeted him with "Prithee, Hal, sweet Hal, wilt thou go without a kiss?"

There was Poins. Scowl not, varlet: Tertius, Bardolph: him with his beak in the pottle, with his hand reaching to the comfits, his eye following the bar-maid and his ear open to thy confession. He hath a huge gullet. Once,—I well remember the time,—he loved the daughter of a Jew. Her father loaned him money, so he thought, "One good turn deserves another. Moses hath relieved me in my extremity of my creditors. I will befriend him by relieving him of a superfluous daughter, who shall be allied to nobility." The caitiff

Jew caught Bardolph behind the tapestry ; whom, when he saw, he cried, "Esdramondius, the astrologer, prophesied that a rat, in whom dwelt a devil, should take the form of my friend Bardolf, and be found seeking to pay court to my daughter, Rebecca. Furthermore, Esdramondius charged me straitly, saying, 'When thou findest that rat, scourge him soundly for assuming the shape of thy friend, thy honest friend, thy excellent friend, Bardolph. So shall thy shekels never be less.'" Then calling three serving-men, they bastinadoed Bardolph and shaved his head. Friar, thou hast had thy love passages, else thou art not a man. Intercede not for him, Hal, unless thou buyest his quittance with a song.

PRINCE HAL sings :

Hodge kissed Gillian on the sly,
Picking a plum for his Christmas pie ;
Little he thought that the Friar was nigh,
On Michælmass day in the morning.

Friar was left like a hermit fish,
Swimming alone in a chafing-dish ;
Gillian turned from his suit with a "pish,"
On Michælmass day in the morning.

ACT FOURTH.

SCENE 1.

INTERIOR OF WAKEVILLE CASTLE ; A BRIDE CHAMBER.

TIME : — Eleven, Christmas Night.

[LADY ALICE discovered reclining upon a couch. The NURSE in the act of unclasping jewels.

LADY ALICE :

Nay, nurse, leave me not yet. Take this jewel. (Drawing a ring from her finger.) See, 'tis a balas ruby. Call it my heart's blood.

[The NURSE removes a bracelet from the arm, resembling a serpent.]

LADY ALICE:

An thou wilt give me a knife, nurse, thou shalt have it. See, the green gems that are its eyes are emeralds. It will harm none.

[The NURSE shakes her head and points to the door, where a step is heard pacing through the corridor.]

[LADY ALICE lifts a diamond cross and necklace which have fallen upon her lap.]

LADY ALICE:

An hour, nurse, an hour, and these are thine. Now hath Sathanas bound my body his by double bands. Three years ago my father, setting off for the Holy Land, a pilgrim, left his only daughter a ward with this caitiff Earl. He shewed me fair at first, but soon his wife sickened and died, and then, forsooth, he came with a "Marry me, sweetheart," called me "jewel of his eyes," and "dainty bird." I loved him not. Mine heart was clean gone. I met,—'twas by the river brink,—in coarse attire, ah! coarse attire, the cloud about my star,—I met,—sure 'twas my second self. I loved him. He loved me. The lad was noble. Soon I found,—ah! 'twas a night in June, the nightingale sang from the thicket, I had gone out to see mine Arthur in our trysting-place, oh! a woful sight,—warm blood, a garment rent, a good sword broken. Then I knew his fate. Oh! they had slain him for his love of me. I found myself at morn in this room. Mine jailer brought missives in my father's hand, saying that he had given me to the earl; that I must marry. So this holy morn I stood, by compulsion, not by mine own will, before the altar in the oratory. I vowed that I would not marry, but the priest feigned that my noes were yesses. Armed men with axe, spear, bolt and partisan guarded each doorway, else I had been free, and now — One hour, nurse, one little hour.

[The steps draw nearer; knockings are heard at the door. NURSE partially opens it revealing, attired as a gallant bridegroom, EARL BARNABAS.]

EARL :

Hell-cat, begone. My bird of paradise calls to her mate. My rose hath shed her leaves and crimsons to my footfall.

NURSE :

Hush ! be still. My lady prayeth at the Virgin's shrine. Her vow endeth at midnight. Wait till then.

[**EARL BARNABAS** and the **NURSE** both withdraw. The door closes.]

SCENE 2.

THE SAME.

LADY ALICE, solus :

My soul grows ashy at the thought of him.
Haste, gentle Death, and give that soul the slip,
That, coming, breathless clay, with lip all cold,
Waiting its wormy tenants, may repel.
Oh ! Thou great Father, infinite in good,
Who comest to the meadow grass and dost
Even take care of sparrows, hear me now.
Give me long ages passed in weltering fire
On purgatorial coasts, or strike me dumb
In blank annihilation's apathy,
Sans heart, brain, blood or body any more ;
Crush me between the ponderous orbs of space ;—
But save me from my tyrant.

Oh ! I kneel

And call thee with a voice the storm o'erpowers.
The moments fly ; death comes. I thank thee, thank thee.

[The **LADY** swoons. Music fills the bride chamber. Fairies are heard singing :

Her couch is white, all lily white,
Her virgin soul is whiter ;
And holy angels, all the night,
Keep love-watch, purer, brighter :
She sleeps : she sleeps.

[The FAIRY QUEEN enters, attired as in the masque, touches the
LADY upon the eyes and forehead and sings

Ne'er shall mortal's kisses
Meet thy lips when chidden ;
All the future's blisses
Wait thee, maid, though hidden.

[The FAIRY QUEEN withdraws behind the screen. LADY ALICE
revives from her swoon.

LADY ALICE :

I dreamed a wondrous dream ; a soft rich light,
With music in it, flooded all the sense,
And then a thought, that had no words, became
A singing creature of the element,
And touched mine eyes with jewel-studded wand.

The FAIRY QUEEN, still hidden by the screen, sings :

Wouldst thou find the lost one's grave ?
Wouldst thou 'scape the midnight's doom ?
Follow me ; be strong and brave ;
Thou shalt kneel at Arthur's tomb.

LADY ALICE :

I hear voices. I know I sleep not. Oh ! where ? Oh ! where ?
Let me find his grave and die upon it.

Fall thou white snow for bridal coverlet ;
Wail ye wild winds your lullaby. I'll sleep ;
Then, when they find me frozen stark at morn
Our dust will mingle. I shall rest with him,
And, from our blended elements, shall spring
A flower perfumed with fragrance gathered where
Dead lips pressed silently eternal troth.
Sweetest, thou'rt in thy bridal chamber now.
Oh ! clasp me in thine unembodied arms :
Bear me a virgin soul to Heaven's high court.
Forget thyself in ashes, oh ! my clay.

The invisible FAIRY sings again :

Follow me without delay :
 I will lead thee from thy doom ;
 Through the arras take thy way ;
 It shall end at Arthur's tomb.

[LADY ALICE rises, snatching the lamp from the sconce, parts the tapestry and steps upon a concealed trap, where, slowly sinking, she disappears.

SCENE 3.

A DUNGEON IN WAKEVILLE CASTLE.

[Young ARTHUR, son of the banished EARL, discovered attired in coarse frieze.

ARTHUR :

Three years have passed. I seem a grey-beard now,
 With all my manhood's powers not yet full blown.
 But for these little fairies, my sweet friends,
 Madness had quenched my reason, but they come
 And play their merry antics all the night
 To cheer the frosty solitude. I'll sleep.
 My jailer thrusts through iron bars the dole
 Of bread and water ; then for three days more
 I see no presence. It is better so,
 Yet hath my young blood courage ! They are nigh.

Invisible FAIRIES sing :

The golden gates of Love unbar ;
 The honey moon hath tarried,
 But ere hath set the Christmas star
 It shall behold thee married.

[The ceiling of the dungeon settling down, parts, leaving an aperture. The trap descends, LADY ALICE standing upon it, robed as a

bride, still holding in her hand a silver lamp, until it reaches the level of the dungeon floor.

ARTHUR, vailing his eyes.

This vision o'erpowers me. Perchance
It omens death, who comes and holds a-jar
The body's gate and shows me paradise.
This is mine Alice: gentle death was kind
And cropt that lily flower and bore it up
To Heaven's empurpled floors, where it blooms now.
One look, one more, sweet death, and I am thine.
I gaze my soul away; a moment's pang,
And this rude flesh shall melt; an icy thrill,—
Burst, burst, cold heart,—then freedom.

LADY ALICE speaks:

Holy saints!
He lives. My Arthur, I am safe with thee;
Now with my true love's kisses on my lip
Come death.

[Curtain falls.]

ACT FIFTH.

SCENE 1.

INTERIOR OF THE ABBEY OF THE BENEDICTINES; JUDGMENT HALL.

TIME:—Early morning, 'day after Christmas.

[KING HENRY seated on the Abbot's throne; COURTIERs, MEN-AT-ARMS. At the KING's right hand kneels, now habited in splendid costume, the ancient TRAVELER.]

KING HENRY:

Trusty cousin and well-beloved, we reinstate thee in all thy honors and dignities of our own free grace. Acquitted of the charge of trea-

son, rise, Earl of Wakeville. Thy nephew hath wrought thee foul wrong; first, by exposing thee, through malice and perjury, to the King's anger; but most grievously, as thou sayest, by laying bloody hands upon Arthur, son of thine old age, left an infant on thy departure, and disguised as thy woodman's son.

[EARL OF WAKEVILLE rises.]

KING HENRY:

The Reverend Abbot hath condemned Friar Lawrence to three year's imprisonment in the dungeon of the Abbey for violation of the vows of a holy monk. Shall the King's justice be less swift?

[Enter NURSE of LADY ALICE, breathless.]

NURSE:

I will speak, though Heaven's King sit in the Abbot's chair. Hath earth grown old, that it stirreth not to shake turrets and dungeon keeps about villainous Earls who work foul outrage on tender maids?

[MEN-AT-ARMS at the door endeavor to restrain her.]

NURSE, frantic:

Say not "hush!" I tell thee I'll speak an it were doomsday. Be ye cursed.

KING, loudly:

Bring her here. Judgment and mercy are the habitations of the throne. Tell thy tale, beldame.

NURSE:

She was a gentle girl; her cheek the snow-drop, her lip the carnation, her eye the doe, her heart the home for maidenly thoughts to nestle in like doves. Yester morn was Christmas. Earl Barnabas sent tokens that he bade the Lady Alice to vespers and high mass in the oratory of the castle. Thereat, donning brave attire with jewels, in honor of the day, she knelt at the altar. The priest mumbled at the mass-book till he came to the marriage vows. Forgetful, in her devotions, that this man, her

jailer, was close at hand, she heard not, till he came unto the question, "Wilt thou marry him?" Then wildly starting, she cried, for all to hear, "I was plighted in troth to Arthur, son of the woodman; if he is dead, then, to Heaven." The Friar made answer, "She consenteth," and pronounced them one flesh.

Her bower maiden was sent away; she had a tender heart.— "Hound and hell-cat," driven to and fro, with "get thee here" and "get thee there," Earl Barnabas came and said, "Play thou the bower maiden for the nonce, and here's gold for thy pains." She knelt and begged me, "Stay an hour, nurse;" gave bribes of jewels. They are accursed, her blood is on them. (Dashes the jewels at the King's feet.) I took a vow to buy the hour. The caitiff Earl came to the door of her chamber. I met him with "She prayeth to the Virgin. Her vow runneth unto the midnight." Then, with a "Get thee gone to thy kennel," he thrust me from the passage, locked the door from without, and took the key.

"Hound and hell-cat," he called me. Ha, ha! "hound and hell-cat," and "get thee to thy kennel." I climbed by the loose ivy, swinging above the moat. Earl Barnabas entered, while the hell-cat, gazing from outer darkness through the casement, saw. There was no door, and yet the maid was gone. He searched behind the arras; stabbed with his dagger through the pictures; struck at the panelings for secret passages. He called me "hell-cat! ha, ha! hell-cat!"

Then, cursing that she was gone, he cried, "Some fiend hath forced her from me. This Arthur was her lover. Three years hath he nursed love in his dungeon. He shall die at sun-rise." "Hell-cat, to thy kennel! ha, ha!"

KING HENRY:

The dappled east grows red. Blow trumpets for a march.

SCENE 2.

DUNGEON OF WAKEVILLE CASTLE.

[ARTHUR and LADY ALICE discovered kneeling. They rise.]

ARTHUR :

Cold are thy lover's lips. Old death hath stood,
Sweet Alice, bending o'er me since the night
When the June nightingales interpreted
Our silent hearts to music. Kiss me sweet.

[Kisses.]

I am a man again ; thy balmy breath,
More than a blast of trumpets, thrills the blood.
God worketh not by halves. Black Death avaunt.
Come to the bridal chamber where Despair
Kneels in disheveled robes and clasps in vain
Her tyrant's knees :

Come where the pale monk sees
Heaven's shining gates a-jar : come not to me.
Oh ! Alice, Alice, let me touch once more
Thy true hand.

Sweetheart, this is not a dream.

ALICE :

Hush, fond one, hush ! my cheeks are all a-glow
With sudden crimson : now my soul's dim east
Flashes with Hope's rich sunrise. Faith, the star,
Trembles, while Joy, the sky-lark, flutters up
To greet the new day's dawning.

Holy Saints !

Our jailer comes. His step hath murder in't.
Now Heaven defend us.

ARTHUR :

Alice quench the light.
I'll meet him from the dark.

[Extinguishes the taper.]

EARL BARNABAS without:

I heard voices. Ah! I have it. There's a light. It shines from Arthur's cell. I'd know that voice were I in Tophet and it came through heated sulphur clouds. But how found she his place of custody? There are, in this old castle, winding stair-cases, secret passages and places of refuge. She, at her wit's end, stealing from the bower, lamp in hand, fell on some blind road ending in the vaults.

Here hath the dainty wanton found a nest.
 The doves were cooing, billing. Beelzebub,
 Aid me to some keen torture; Come, Revenge,
 Engender in my heart. "We seek and find;
 Knock and 'tis opened," Friar Lawrence saith.
 The shining Horror colleth to my brain,
 Glares through the eye-balls, hisses from the tongue.
 I'll tear her, shrieking, from this puny boy,
 And bear her to her bower. Manacled,
 He shall lie cursing at the outer door;
 Gagged, that he rave not, but with ears unbound.
 Ha, ha! 'tis double sweet. Let shavelings cry
 That "judgment waits us." Where the judgments now?
 What power hath God in castles? Empty wind
 Against the turret, waves on the firm shore!

[FAIRY QUEEN appears in the dungeon, now personating LADY ALICE, holding in her hand the silver lamp re-lit: sings:

True hearts whom Heaven unites in one,
 His mercies ne'er forget.
 Wait, sweetheart, for the rising sun;
 We shall be married yet.

These are thine own ancestral doors;
 Before the stars have set
 Thy foot shall press the bridal floors;
 We shall be married yet.

EARL BARNABAS without:

Is she witch or devil?

As if to mock me, she lights the lamp. Pah! The stench of the corpse is in the rotting crypt.

My blood runs chill. Within she stands and smiles.
Oh, horror! horror! fiend inspire me. Deeds
I buried years a-gone, like dead men, rise
From charnel vaults within my loathing breast
That turns them out to sight.

I will not back!
Maid, to mine arms! Youth, to thy manacles!
I'll give his flesh by sunrise to the worms,
And riot sweetly.

[The FAIRY QUEEN, still personating LADY ALICE, glides through the barred door, which, by some glamour, seems to the eye of the EARL to open and close. Leaping from the shade of the corridor, he strives to grasp her in his arms. She recedes, singing, beyond the scenes.]

Though true Love mourns the fond delay,
With eyes by tear-drops wet,
Rise, Bridegroom, 'tis thy wedding day.
We shall be married yet.

SCENE 3.

THE BRIDAL CHAMBER.

TIME:—Early Morning. ARTHUR: LADY ALICE.

ARTHUR:

We have arisen, Sweet, as thou didst descend. Moved by some
invisible power, the trap hath brought us upward in its return.—
A sword!

Good weapon, welcome to mine hand again.
Some Power, that deigns to visit mortal man,
Arms me to guard thy bower.

[Door opens. EARL BARNABAS enters outer room.]

EARL BARNABAS :

She passed me in the corridor. Ha, voices!
Hath the hell-cat nurse crept in?

[Draws a weapon.]

Maids' blood turns white and lilies on the cheek
When men draw swords upon them. I have sent
My gallows knaves to bind the caitiff boy
And cast him at the threshold.

Ho, within!

Witch! hell-cat! beldame! to thy straw again.
Wild, blushing beauty, like the virgin sun,
Clothes her sweet self with roses.

[Enters the room. LADY ALICE on the couch. ARTHUR with
drawn sword.]

ARTHUR :

Thou didst o'erpower me when last we met,
By ruffians hidden in ambush. Man to man
I fear thee not, though cased in triple steel.

[They fight: EARL BARNABAS falls. Armed retainers enter at the
door.]

ARTHUR :

Behold your master. Him hath Heaven o'erthrown.
This feeble arm, lean with a three year's fast,
Smote feebly as the rush, till, through it ran
A keen, swift, leaping vengeance from above.
So doth God's judgment overtake the strong.

EARL BARNABAS reviving on the floor, and partially rising :

I did but faint. 'Tis over. Cleave him down.
An hundred acres to the first who smites
And fifty to the second.

Kill him not.

My swoon is over, and the fiery pulse
Leaps ten-fold. Oh! revenge! My purpose holds.
Bind him across the threshold.

[The retainers rush at ARTHUR. Trumpets without. Cries in the corridor, "The King! make way for King Henry!" All pause: ARTHUR with drawn sword, now grasping LADY ALICE by the waist and defending her from a nook in the wall.

[KING HENRY enters, surrounded by nobles and a guard.

KING HENRY :

Whom have we here ?

EARL BARNABAS, rising :

One blow at her ! Perdition, be my friend.
Hell, I am thine. Leap, weapon.

[Stabs at LADY ALICE ; ARTHUR parrying the blow ; EARL BARNABAS falls again, pierced.

KING HENRY :

Justice is all an attribute of God,
Who maketh King's His ministers, but, when
The tardy heralds wait, He cometh down
Writing men's doom in sword-thrusts.

[LADY ALICE and ARTHUR kneel before the KING.

KING HENRY :

Thy name ?

ARTHUR :

Arthur de Wakeville ; of the banished Earl his youngest son ; bred as a Forester ; dungeoned three mortal years for loving her who now kneels in thy presence. In the night, fleeing from him who welters there, she found my dungeon. Upward, led through the same path, with but this puny arm, this slender steel, I sought to save her from Earl Barnabas. He fell, when entering, his ruffians came and sought to overpower me. But Heaven sent thee, its dread vicegerent.

KING HENRY :

We do appoint thee to a penance, boy. Sad wooings make kind

bindings. For thy crime King Hymen shall pronounce thee bound
for life in golden chains; this bower thy prison-house; this win-
some one thy jailer. Gentle Night shall fold her starry baldric
round the world, while Vesper smiles on thy young honeymoon.

[Curtain falls.]

EPILOGUE.

As, when Heaven's Lord and King to earth came down,
And a child's body veiled Omnipotence,
The Providence, that rules unbounded space
And everlasting time, descends to man.

While morning crimsons on her bridal bed
To greet her golden lover, and the stars
Are winnowed from Heaven's threshing floor, come forth:
Behold the Drama's meaning and its end.

All things conspire to wait upon God's will.
The eastern redness of a bad man's state
Changes to lowering tempests ere the night.
The fates, that tempt the good, are sent to them
As purifying trials for the soul.
The frost, that leaves no print upon the gem,
Blasts the rich tulip flaunting o'er the flowers.
The sword, that stabs a monarch to the heart,
And lets out life, harms not those spirits bright
Who walk in the world's furnace all unseen.
The blast, that wrecks the laden argosy,
Harms not the nautilus, that furls its sail
And finds still haven till the storm is passed.
No man can die whom Heaven appoints to live;
No man be slave whom Christ anointeth king.
God helps the needy. Prayer is but a breath,
Yet bridges o'er the space 'twixt God and man,
Makes stairs to topmost Heaven where Christ descends:
And praying souls are strong, with might of heart.

The thought, that rose to kneel at Heaven's high throne,
Leaves the void breast for Deity to fill.

Earth's drama ends in tragedy, though first
'Tis but a jolly feast. Good men must fight
Opposing powers and battle fiends of hell.
What though they seem to perish? They arise.
The mighty Leader calls;—They hear His voice.
Had gold been king, Croesus had ruled the world;
Had Pride, then Satan. Love is Lord of all.
Incarnate Love rules the wide universe,
And the slain lambkins of Messiah's fold
Grow to be angels in eternal life.

The Drama's task is ended now.
Weak verses to your Maker bow.
The poet sings when Heaven inspires;
The flame recedes, the voice expires.

At the conclusion of the Drama a sumptuous banquet, in the ancient style, awaited the festive company, and the entertainments of the evening were concluded by old-fashioned dances. Nothing occurred to impair the hilarity of the evening, the performances in the theatre and winter garden having called forth smiles and tears, laughter and long continued applause.

Upon the snow-covered grounds which encircled the Priory that Christmas night, hiding stealthily from view, yet beholding the brilliant lights in the windows and the airy forms flitting to and fro, maddened by the delicious music that mingled with the breeze and by every peal of merriment that smote the ear, and nursing within the bosom stormy, frenzied feelings which he called "love," the Rector of Richmanstown paced to and fro like some disturbed ghost.

Between Squire Brompton and himself had now subsisted for some time an open rivalry. A dark suspicion that Dr. Bushwig had been concerned in the abduction of Rosa Devereux had begun to settle down, no one knew by what process, upon the minds of the neighboring gentry. Seven years ago this night, Charity Green had timidly implored alms and shelter of this man, who thrust her from his door in helpless childhood, while conscience whispered that she was the nearest relative. Now the plotter was as far from the earldom as at that hour.

The traveler sets out, in the early morning, to climb some mountain summit which appears at a short hour's distance. At noon, though hill after hill has been surmounted, the tall peak still looms before him with many a chasm between. The atmosphere, which was balmy and humid in the valley, grows frostier with every additional elevation, and the winds more keen and cutting; yet still the pilgrim toils on, perhaps with the vague hope of reaching soon the journey's end. The sun lingers upon that royal pinnacle

and gilds its icy peaks with purple and golden splendors, and now he stands at last upon the grand plateau, which, from the distance, seemed but an arrow's flight from the object of his ambition. The chamois gazes from the rocks; the lammergeyer screams; the alpine storm with driving wraiths of mist, ghostlike and fearful, marshals afar its armies. Then he pauses, for now that mountain path ends at the sheer verge of a precipice. A step, and if he ventures, whirled from crag to crag, the mangled remains will serve the vulture for a morning meal. Yet even then he still must strive on in the mad passion for adventure, nor will he pause though every voice of reason cries "return."

To night the Rector of Richmanstown, arisen already to the mountain's highest table-land, and beholding bright in air the empurpled glories of his hope, had reached the yawning gulf which the Unseen One had placed to bar the passage to the long sought goal.

As the stars, climbing zenithward told the hour of twelve, a stealthy shadow emerged from the copsewood, creeping with cautious steps within earshot of the festival. Whoever that shadow was he beheld a sight to madden first and then to convulse with torture the burning heart.

What enchantment diffused itself abroad on the clear air! What peace reigned on silent earth! What healing balm for weary man dropped mutely from the high, celestial spaces! Upon the broad balcony, gazing on the starlit landscape, hastily wrapt in some costly mantle, and with a countenance which in that tender moonlight shone pure and glorious, as if some heavenly visitant had taken beauteous shape to listen to the Christmas melody, stood the mother of Charity Green.

Then the shadow moved; it shook; it found eyes to gaze, and soul to madly worship, while the very blood, now vinous with passion, was slowly bittering into hate. And

the shadow found ears to listen, peering all the while. It was the rival's call.

A stately, noble figure emerges, speaking at first in a rich, manly tone, "Lady Devereux." It is no boy's voice. The youth woos in accents like those of a reed shaken by the wind, but manhood, in its imperial noon of culture and art and strength and wisdom and experience, finds utterance for all the octaves. The master of the mansion came out into the night: the sound of sweet music floated from within, but there all was still and holy, as when the Bethlehem shepherds watched their flocks of old.

Gathered into the folds of his cloak, and hidden behind a buttress, so near almost as to feel the warm air floating through the open windows, the Rector heard words spoken which were designed for one ear alone, and, listening, knit the brows and set the teeth firmly, as one who is being broken on the wheel and yet is determined to suppress the inward agony.

The lover had now approached his mistress, tenderly folding around her an additional protection against the pure but frosty air. Perhaps we, too, may hear the words which she utters leaning on that manly arm: "I was thinking, when you called me, of my unfulfilled use in life. Hitherto I have accomplished but little, and must do more in future. There is a wide difference between being lovely and being called so. I seem wakening from a sleep of years. The good Spirit of Christmas is prompting me to resolutions. I will, with His help, imitate the Divine example. I know, for something within tells me so, that my daughter is to return. Then we shall labor with one purpose and from a common heart. The sisters in the convent called me dreamy, but now I seem to feel a heavenly presentiment."

The gentleman took the coy hand, that slightly trembled, irresolute, and then allowed itself to linger in sweet cap-

tivity, while he replied: "I, too, would hallow this good hour by a Christmas vow. In these old demesnes I have slept,—it is sleep to live chiefly for self,—I will keep nothing hidden,—for five and twenty years. I have been an epicurean of the intellect. The day-dreams of my youth all melted into nothingness, and the years of manhood bore no fruit. What right have I to these broad acres, to these starry influences? My stewardship has been unfaithful. I have not lived for others, but, with God's help, I will."

The deep voice trembled, paused and was still. The lady gazed upon the noble countenance unobserved, seeking, through teary eyes, as if to read its very spirit.

Now, in a tender whisper, the voice began again. Did she divine the words while yet unspoken? The quick blood went and came; a gentle sigh moved the breast; the eyes almost closed; the little hands stirred and lay still again.—"At my father's bidding, for the purpose of uniting neighboring estates, seventeen years found me affianced to one who is no more in this world. She was good, kind and noble, a true wife, a true mother, a true friend. Dying in youth I said afterward, in my heart 'I will hamper myself with no more ties.' The young man's faith in love is a necessary illusion; let others cherish it, but I have seen that it is only the gleam which the rising sun casts upon the gray cloud. I had been content to go through life's common round unconscious of the latent wonder-world within my own bosom. Nay, start not, I cherished no passions to consume the senses. Fancy and reason and imagination budded like flowers in the winter garden while the great earth is bleak and verdureless. Then, Marie, then, meeting you, I forgot my forty-seven years. I learned first to distrust and then to hate my own philosophy. And now I believe in love, pure, holy and eternal."

The chest of the strong man heaved, and the voice, interpenetrated with emotion grew like that of a child. It is a

strange fact that the human voice is so changeable. With expiring people it grows unearthly. Love and death have power to awaken for upright men the same unknown depths of being, and both impart the same mystic cadence to the accents of the speech. The lover paused; the lips moved; the words came, "Through you the faith of love has descended, to awaken, and, I trust, to purify the heart. Believe me, that heart is open before you. It is all yours, Marie, all yours."

Cold, rigid, as if it were a statue of frozen iron that holds within its breast one deathless, burning coal of hatred and despair, the crouching shadow concealed by the buttress heard this confession. Seven years ago this very night he had turned to gay dreams, full of wine, while, borne upon the sleety blast, a homeless, famished orphan's cry rose up against him to high Heaven;—seven years ago.

That rich and mellow voice continued, "Take me, my love, if at all, as a man of unworthy life, whose past has been trivial and who has made poor use of many gifts. I verily purpose within myself, though this sweet treasure, which I crave, may never be mine, to do God and my neighbor a true man's service."

The gentle hand stirred as if it were a wild bird; thrilled to feel the clasping fingers tremble in their turn; then rested content. The bright stars beheld themselves reflected in twin dew-drops sparkling on the glowing cheek. A softly murmured word, as if it were a youngling from the nest of Psyche's whitest dove, fluttered on the lip but found no voice and sang its little lay in answering silence. The lady gave no reply. Does the rose speak, when, touched by the early sunbeam, the bud opens and becomes a blossom?—Marie murmured an inarticulate assent, and blooming there as if she were a stainless lily in the mystic light, drooped the graceful head for one fond instant on the lover's breast. Two hearts were plighted with Heaven's benison.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MY SPIRIT SHALL NOT ALWAYS STRIVE.

Attorney Bluefil was celebrated among practitioners at the bar for sharp practice, his clients being principally to be found among a class whom fast living had brought into embarrassment and disrepute. When at the height of professional reputation young lords and the scions of high families sought his assistance, in cases of emergency, resulting from ill-success on the turf or with the dice box, when debts were pressing and money lenders shy. A large and useful acquaintance among broken down men of pleasure, who, ruined themselves through their vices, maintained a precarious existence upon the prodigality and excesses of others, brought the attorney into lucrative business as umpire and referee, and arbiter of disputes having an origin over cards or the bottle. Like many others, the vices which had first befriended took him in their toils at last, till a loose life among sporting men and their no less disreputable companions of the other sex, had undermined his reputation for promptness and skill, and reduced a large practice to meagre limits. Since the death of the Earl of Riverside his fortunes had been in a state of constant decline, and debts became pressing as clients fell off. The opportune discovery of the instrument, by the terms of which the Rector of Richmanstown became so large a legatee, reanimated, for a time, his drooping spirits. Although still almost unemployed, such as mingled with him remarked a revival of expensive habits. The Attorney had received

three thousand pounds as a recompense for the finding of the will.

We must now follow the Rector of Richmanstown. The silent hour which witnessed the extinction of every hope of winning the hand of Marie Devereux was not without its good and gracious influence, which, had it found a welcome in the breast, even then might have averted the impending catastrophe. Returning, toward morning, to the parsonage, his chafed horse gory with the spur and flecked with foam, the better genius, Spirit of the Comforter, Spirit that shall not always strive with man, was pressing nearer for a last appeal.

Wretched in mind, and spent with rage, the desperate man sank exhausted to his pillow. Was the spell of Christmas there, too? Lying in a partial doze, the first calm moment for many months, with a whisper of "peace, be still," visited the chafed and darkly plotting brain. Old memories revived; a dead mother's image grew visible, set like a picture in the golden frame of love, its fore-ground the grave, its dim back-ground immortality. Faithful recollection revived the dew of youth, the freshness of his life's young morning; he was innocent then. The years that are no more became fearfully real. A village girl who had been youth's first attraction, she would come, returned to haunt the conscience. When but a lad from college, beguiling vacation in a sequestered rural neighborhood, with book, rod and gun, this tender innocence had won his heart away. The sun of his manhood's hope had set in darkness when Marie Devereux had drooped her glowing face upon Hugh Brompton's breast, but now the pallid, morning moon, all ghostly-like and shadowy,—the moon of a love that had been before the evil days drew nigh or the years in which he found no pleasure, shone dim and wasted on the soul's ruins. And yet there was a fascination in the past. For one brief hour it was lived over. The pulse fluttered

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with a reviving throb of boyhood's joy. How sweet the hawthorn blossoms were in those fresh days; there were no such hawthorns now. What romance haunted the wild wood-paths where he used to stray with gentle, blushing Harriet, the gray old Forester's daughter, and whispered of the affection that should bind them in blissful union, ripening year after year, as the fruits grow perfect from the flowers. Simple-hearted child, credulous to his vows, alas! too credulous. Where did he last behold her? Oh! where?

The Rector started upon the pillow as if stung by an adder. He remembered returning to his lodgings from the play, through London sleet and fog and raw mist and darkness. The gas-lights flickered; the streets were almost still and empty. A forlorn, painted creature, with madness in the shrill voice, half crazed with gin, wholly maddened with a life of infamy, had accosted him. It was fearful, yet Conscience bade him look and spared no line in all the photograph, that must revive and loom to life's proportions and be visible in eternity's foreboding light.

Yes, it was all fresh as yesterday; the hollow cheeks, the hacking cough, the burning hand. He had just returned from a tour of Europe, from standing by moonlight amidst the ruins of the Coliseum, and gathering awful thoughts in the streets of Pompeii. The tragedy of the evening had been Hamlet, and the eyes had moistened as a skillful actress realized the woe of crazed Ophelia.

There, free of cost, a living ruin stood and said, "Gaze at me. Once I was a vestal temple; now a den where serpents crawl and gender in." No Charlotte Cushman ever made agony so real to the mind's eye as did this one, with London street-lamps for the illuminations of the playhouse, and Despair for prompter, and Crime and Ruin for companions, and Death and Hell to shout plaudits at the curtain's fall. And that ruin was his work; that actress his

pupil. Here ended the path that began beneath whispering branches and amidst the honeyed summer air. No; it did not end here.—Conscience knocked loudly then; remorse had stung; pity moved; he had taken gold, all in his purse, and, with a mute gesture, pressed it into the palm at first eager to close upon the shining coin. Then, looking at the averted face to scan the features of her benefactor, the ruin had recognised the first betrayer, dashed the guineas in the kennel and spat upon his face, and turned with a wild curse and fled.

Then Conscience paused, and memory grew blank, and, sinking into quiet rest, it was past mid-day before that sleep was over.

A storm was raging without. The postman brought letters. While perusing the first a vision of the night revived and the face of the dead mother mournfully seemed to float between him and the pages. The missive was from Attorney Bluefil. How inevitably to the experienced eye the astuteness and cunning which serve as the concealments of guilt betray its hidden outlines. The sharp practitioner needed money, and, having received three thousand pounds already, now stated that one of the witnesses refused to testify without a bonus of one thousand pounds. It was Mr. Tallboys, the decayed gentleman, who had acknowledged in private the important particulars which, when combined with the apparent genuineness of the instrument, had satisfied Sergeant Wildfire.

The case, as the sporting barrister now wrote, could not pass to a successful issue unless this party's testimony was obtained. The close of the attorney's curt epistle was still more unwelcome, stating there that his own services in bringing the matter to a fortunate conclusion justified a fee somewhat larger than usual, and that the will must remain unproved without five thousand guineas.

Prior to the discovery of this document, Attorney Blue-

fil had called upon the Rector at his lodgings in London, hinting, in a carefully guarded manner, that a vague report had reached his ears of the existence of a second testament revoking the former in favor of the Divine. The gentlemen arrived at a speedy understanding, and, so far as mere words were concerned, without a trace of aught dishonorable. Mr. Bluefil made the proposition that he would institute a careful search among the papers of the late Earl, and, if the document should be found, ascertain the present habitation of the witnesses, and secure their testimony, receiving three thousand pounds for his services, from the proceeds of a loan to be negotiated upon its face. It was a shrewd and daring offender's expedient for unlawful gain, and Dr. Bushwig so understood it, reading forgery in the Attorney's eye. The first letter received from Bluefil, narrating the finding of the will, was designed simply as a subterfuge, and for the purpose of introducing the affair under favorable colors to the eminent counsel employed already to contest the succession to the estate. In this second application for money the Rector discerned more than its mere language might convey,—discerned that the writer, knowing that he was able, without personal danger, to prevent a verdict in its favor, was determined to have his price.

The letter dropped from the reader's hand upon the floor. That creeping shudder which steals over men when their destiny is at a turn, soft, still, cold and palpable as the falling snow-flakes that now began to settle about the window-pane, arrested for a moment the partially formed determination. The Rector rose and walked mechanically to the oaken book-case. He had been something of a reading man. The tall folios in their massive, dingy bindings of the last three hundred years, now dusty with neglect, recalled those mental states in which he had taken delight in their worm-eaten pages. As is often the case in an abstract

mood, he took one at random from the shelf nearest at hand. It was a quaint old volume of the seventeenth century, now obsolete and forgotten, bearing the title, "God's Revenge Against Murder." Upon the yellow pages the rude woodcuts seemed to figure as if they were his own fearful thoughts in many a midnight fantasy, grotesque and elf-like, but terrible. Yet there was a fascination about the letter-press. Legend after legend, wherein dark crimes had brought a sudden and unexpected retribution upon their designers, narrated in a style of Saxon honesty not without keenness and vigor, preached with a directness of application from the mouldering tome. Reading at first mechanically, the abstracted man soon became interested,—painfully interested, till the temples began to throb and moles to form before the eyes, and then, closing the volume, he replaced it on its shelf.

Still in this abstract mood he listened. The wind was rising. The branches of the old elm, now leafless, were mournfully creaking. The Winter blast sighed through them as if it were a living thing. A stray gleam of sunshine, which had struggled through the snow-clouds, lit up for a moment the summit of the spire of St. Winifred's, and rested with its brightest ray upon the sacred emblem of a Christian's faith crowning the slender pinnacle.

As when some huge sea-bird, with vast, white wings, lifts itself heavily from the billows, and, wildly screaming, beats its passage against the storm, so Conscience, pale and spectral, arose from the dark and stormy whirlpool of passions within the breast, and opposed the tempest of evil resolutions, and startled the inward silence with its foreboding cry.

A faint odor of spring flowers was diffused throughout the room. There is something in the smell of blossoms, which, like the sound of distant music at night-fall, has power to connect the mind with other days; and now that

fragrance called to vivid recollection a certain April day when he had found violets in a sheltered woodland nook. He was then but a lad. Memory pictured how they looked, peeping from their mossy knoll, some just opening, others full blown, all laden with more than perfume, with intoxication, with delight. Did he remember the same moss-grown bank upon a summer eve afterward, when the quiet evening air was soft and still, and his arm twined round the slender waist of the Forester's daughter, and his warm breath moved the stray ringlet upon her cheek?—Ah, did he remember? And how he kissed away those falling tears, and bade her trust his knightly honor and plighted love?

The meditative man started from the revery. Once more the faint winter sunbeam, breaking through the tempest, suspended its radiant glory for a brief instant on the cross. Shuddering from the spectacle, he moved away.

Our best and our worst counsel comes to us often, when all alone. The Rector glanced at the time-piece upon the mantle, a gaudy, French toy. The richly enamelled dial bore a picture of Venus rising from the sea, crowned with roses, and pointing, with a laugh, to the flying hours. Then, basking before the fire, and idly gazing upon the figure, it seemed floating into the mind and whispering there the melody and rhyme of a light Parisian air, connected by the association of ideas with luxurious scenes in that metropolis of all the pleasures and of all the vices. Conscience, whispering of many things, but most of all of judgment to come, was met and answered with the subtle logic of the epicurean. The servant of the altar was fast reasoning away his own better destiny.

Shall I, or shall I not? That was the question which some stern principle within, bent upon an answer, pressed to immediate decision. The Rector, reviewing his position, summoned up every faculty to aid in that final survey. He

had abducted the heiress, who was by this time, or would soon be, unless Tofton failed him, dead. If she were,—well; he was Earl of Riverside; but, if not dead? The heavy hand pressed wearily across the brow.

Singular as it may seem, this man had never contemplated his position in case the plot should fail. The question rose, Would he repent if sure of the miscarriage of the scheme? He wavered.

Conscience, “accusing angel” thou art named, yet often might be better styled “protecting friend.” Thou standest with thy cold eyes that pierce through all illusions, and readest in Heaven’s clear light the secret motives hidden within the act. Thou turnest the couch of roses into the bed of thorns. Thou smitest down the flimsy defences which false reasoning builds against thee, and enterest into the secret places of the soul, and callest forth the deeds of all the life, weighing their good and evil in balances of judgment. Yet, Conscience, would that men might know, that they might consider, when thou drawest nigh, in thy terribleness, and makest the soul to writhe as thy glances pierce it, thou laborest to save from a worse doom that cometh hard after. Thus far thou art the friend, but when thou turnest, and art gone, could we follow thee in thy flight from the heart that rejected thy monitions, spreading cloudy vans thou dost arise, and art accusing angel evermore.

During all that day, first in sleep and afterward in waking, Conscience had been the Rector’s faithful friend, calling from its burial places the unrepented past and striving to rouse that heart to feel that good was good and that evil was evil. The solitary thinker was moved; a vague regret began to flutter in the breast, and, with it, a partial wish that life had been devoted to other and to better ends. It was Conscience asking now and forcing home the question, “If Rosa is not dead are you willing to repent of your cruel schemes against her?”

The fire crackled on the hearth; the clock ticked on the mantle; the floating Venus on the sea was pointing, with arch look and pleasure-loving smile, to the receding hour. Again the words of that gay, French melody seemed to be whispered in the brain. A life dedicated to luxurious enjoyment had been heretofore the Rector's ideal; nor had he been actuated by any real object beyond selfish gratification. "No!" was the inward rejoinder to the questioning voice, "Why should I repent? Will repentance win the earldom? Yes, if contrition could drive a dagger through Hugh Brompton's heart, but not otherwise. The thought pleased, and he gurgled a hoarse laugh, the first that day.

Still the soft, pleading voice was whispering within. It smote upon another chord. A wild spasm shot across the face. The irresolute man thought, or was it Conscience that thought in him, and for him? "Take your horse, and ride post-haste to Riverside Rectory. Ever since burdened with this guilty secret you have been miserable. Even should you become Earl of Riverside, Conscience would murder sleep, and momentary ruin glare you in the face. Ride at once to the parsonage of Dr. Hartwell; unbosom yourself of all this perilous stuff; resign the clerical position, unworthy as you are of wearing sacred vestments; withdraw the suits; call back your blood-hound, and trust that Providence, which, at every turn, has baffled your schemes for the estate, to guide you through a repentant life to a better destiny."

A momentary lull came on him. The storm within seemed preternaturally to be at rest. He rose, walked to the mirror and started back from the haggard face reflected there. The passions of a few hours had accomplished the work of years. In that countenance,—his own,—the plotter read some of the first consequences of the storm which for seven years had raged within. That delirious desire for Lady Devereux, arrested suddenly and hopelessly, had fixed

an expression there never to be forgotten; the stony look of a gambler who, when the last stake is played and lost, leaves the glittering saloon to wrestle with tempestuous night, all alone with ruin.

Conscience would not let him rest, but whispered, "I am going soon. Decide before I leave you." He thought of suicide,—last refuge of the desperate and despairing, who rush from the antechamber to the bar of judgment, invoking upon their heads eternal doom. He thought of Chivers, killed in a bloody fray, resulting from this very plot; of Roger Benbow waiting as an accusing witness in the other land; of the servant Tofton, here a burglar and now hunting in the footsteps of his own cousin, a helpless girl, intent on blood. Was the night coming on that the study grew dark? The gloom before the mind's eye seemed to cast a palpable shadow that obscured the day.

The Rector listened, and now the storm was rising. The branches of the old tree wrestled against the gust. Night was coming on; aye, night was coming on. Again rose up that thought of suicide. Another shadow stood from amidst the desolation of the past and beckoned with dripping locks and hand of fire. He recollected to have read, on taking up the Times one winter morning, of an abandoned woman whose death had been hastened by her own act. One of her frail companions had testified, on identifying the body, that she had been called, in the days of her innocence, Harriet; that she was often wild and raved for hours of having been betrayed by an Earl's nephew; that, in a paroxysm of insanity, she had flung herself from London bridge,—London's Bridge of Sighs, where many an unfortunate has ended life in black and turbid whirlpools, black and turbid as her own miserable fate. Now it seemed as if the Forester's daughter had arisen from that whirling river to crowd all the day's tortures into one narrow span.

Sick and shuddering at heart another picture arose, a

picture of the future. The Rector of Richmanstown had become Earl of Riverside. The proud man lay dying, for the weight of guilt within the bosom had swept the globes of reason from their orbit and turned to fire within the veins and madness in the mind. The proud man was dying, babbling the while such secrets as made peering, whispering servants shrink away horrified and loathing from the bedside. Then films gathered and a cold chill followed, that, while it obscured the senses, liberated the faculties of the spirit. This was death. In place of the sun, that had forever set, arose a lurid meteor, whose beams were serpents, which fastened upon the phantom, rising from its clay, and spread huge wings. He flew through vacant space. The hollow void of that infernal luminary opened. Criminals of every age and land, tossing wildly from the fire-gulfs which their own passions made as they took shape about the soul, beheld him falling,—falling.—They cried loud, with sepulchral voices, “Ha, ha! art thou become one of us?” And Chivers met him with a “Ha, ha! art thou become one of us?” And he of the thirty pieces, crowned with remorse and clad with suffering, reached out a hand red with the blood of the Innocent, and cried aloud, “I betrayed my Master in the shape of a Man, able to summon twelve legions of angels. Thou didst betray Him in the helpless image of a starving and imploring child.”

Still linger Conscience, thou good angel of bad men. Pause for a little hour in thy upward flight. Conscience did linger, and took the form of clear intelligence to argue within the mind, “If you had married Rosa’s mother what comfort would you have had with her, when the daughter’s blood, perhaps her soul’s blood, was crimsoning the hand that planned the deed? How could you have dared to pillow a husband’s head to sweet dreams on that pure bosom, when those very dreams would have babbled your secret? Oh! fool, fool, not to have thought of this.”

Conscience was not yet done. Still she cried, and now more loudly, "Old friends avert their faces, old neighbors avoid you. Do they divine the secret when furtively they scan the face? Think how many methods there are by which this foul iniquity may come to light. Your servant abroad is a man of desperate passions. You have bought him at a high price. What if, discovering the heiress, he secretes her, and wins fortune by making terms with her mother and the executor? What if, disguised as a gentleman, he wins her to become his wife? How would you act in his place? He will not cause her death when life is worth more than blood. What if, with the heiress in his custody, he impeaches the Rector of Richmanstown for the crime of having sent him abroad with money and with instructions, first to see that no clue should be afforded to her sad fate; and then,—murder. Oh! fool, fool, not to have thought of this!"

A sudden gust shook the heavy casement, and the chimney roared as on the night when the old Earl of Riverside was gathered to his fathers. The winter afternoon was drawing to its close. The Rector rose and shook himself, as if to be free from unwelcome and intrusive meditations. He turned to his bank book: there was a balance of four thousand five hundred pounds to his credit, the last of fifteen thousand borrowed on the security of the forged will. Bitterly rose the thought that he had no friend; that to-morrow, if this were known, he might stand in danger of arrest as a felon. Fear smote heavily; the cold drops came out upon the brow. Conscience whispered once more, with her hand upon the latch, "Make haste; I wait the decision." The brow lowered, the teeth were set together, the resolution was made, and hurled in the face of Conscience as a final answer. "No! Come what might,—ruin, exposure, beggary,—the girl should not be countess."

When Conscience leaves, the fiend is monarch in her place.

There are in Crime seven stages. It is first an infant. Evil thoughts and impure affections are its father and its mother; and, for a cradle, it is rocked within the breast. It lives only in the world of meditation. Upon its unborn features there is a veil. Feet and hands are like the talons of some unclean bird, the claws of some ravenous beast. Possessed of a vampire's appetite, it ravins for blood as for a mother's milk. Secrecy, the guilty nurse, hushes it with finger upon the lips. All the corrupt passions gather in council around the couch, and each endowers the new comer with some peculiar gift.

Crime, in the second stage, opens the bosom-door, crosses the threshold of visible existence, and walks abroad intent upon the deeds for which it had birth and being. An actor of all characters, it plays in Life's theatre as many parts as there are distinct elements in wickedness. It robs on high roads and is a pirate on the high seas, curses in tap-rooms and cants in conventicles, invents all frauds, coins all villainies, walks in all conspiracies, frequents all habitations, assumes all disguises, speaks all languages, provokes all controversies, and never rests day or night, but plots as well with bad men when they dream as against good men when they wake and labor. It hates all that Virtue loves, and loves all that Heaven hates; yet masks its double dealing with vows of love, oaths of honor, proverbs of religion and prayers of godliness. It takes to each man's eye the likeness of his own favorite sin, and tempts ever onward, with the flattering unction of triumph and happiness.

Crime in its third stage accomplishes the objects for which it sought, and, bodiless itself, works to infernal ends through human instruments. Then it returns, laden with wealth of spoil; for the avaricious gold, for the proud distinction, for the sensual license, for the cruel blood;—cry-

ing "Master, rise! eat and drink; be satisfied; thou hast much goods laid up for many days." Then it re-enters the breast full grown, and makes the heart its hell.

In its fourth stage Crime seeks full mastery of the chosen habitation and boldly cries, "Conscience, out! You have no business here." Then Conscience, hitherto pleading vainly during evil years, with awful port and visage terrible to behold, as when the sun shineth in his strength, arraigns this Crime before the tribunal of the man's own meditations, and bears testimony against it. That is the eleventh hour, beyond which few if any amend their lives. If Conscience wins the suit, though not without throes that rend the breast that harbored it, and after struggles in which the soul quivers with no small measure of the pain which it has inflicted on others, the fiend is exorcised. If not, and the man sides against Conscience and with Crime, pallid and with dishevelled locks, sad and tearful, a prophetess of utter woe, the monitress leaves him, and Crime is left sole ruler of the bosom.

Crime has a fifth state after this. There are no compunctious visitings any more. Conscience hovers over him, travels with him, for accusing angel, and darts keen lightnings from without, but finds no abode within. Then Crime says to the soul, with whom it has taken up lodging, "Up! action! action!" When Crime drives the swift firesteeds of the passions, the chariot of destiny rushes fast toward its goal.

After this Crime rises to a sixth stage. The fiend has mined the house he lives in. The appetites, which have gone out at his bidding, to prey upon others, all come back at last to feast upon their master. As the senses sink to imbecility and are unable longer to satisfy those craving tenants, they make the bosom hideous with an intestine war. All that Crime sows outwardly, in deeds which Conscience registers on iron tablet with pen of fire, is reaped

inwardly, when Old Age drives home the loaded wains of Sin's harvest time.

Toward the sands, that, gray and wrinkled, line the shores of the eternal sea, where the great CRIME, grown now colossal, looms up through the subject realms of being, like the spirit of some outcast planet from its mouldering, dissolving dust, comes now, swift flying across the gulf, a death-driven pinnacle. Then Conscience, spreading fiery pinions, takes her station in the prow, while the man who exiled Conscience from the breast, now in the dotage of the natural faculties, with the great Crime crouching in the bony skeleton, all forlorn, all desolate, is lifted and sits behind. Then Conscience blows her trump, and gives those vast and gleamy vans to the storm, and the gulfs whirl and darken, and the land disappears, and the pinnacle flies, bearing its freight, whither, ah! whither? What said the hymn, sung over Lucretia Lorne's dream of judgment, by Charity Green? This is Crime's seventh stage. Its scene of action becomes the second life.

The Rector of Richmanstown exiled Conscience that night, and woke, the ensuing morning, determined upon a plan of action. In reply to Attorney Bluefil he was prompt and energetic. "As soon as the suit is decided," thus ran the answer, "and the validity of the instrument established in Doctors' Commons, you are at liberty to draw upon me for the full amount proposed."

The next step called for a thorough survey of the entire field, and the scheme, conceived with a stoical coolness which astonished himself, when once formed, was carried into immediate execution. First arranging with the curate for the performance of the various sacerdotal functions, the Rector announced his departure for a brief tour on the continent, this being necessary for the restoration of slightly impaired health.

Immediately afterward, first drawing from his banker the

considerable sum still remaining, Dr. Bushwig crossed the channel *en route* for Paris,—where, after remaining for a few days, it was reported that he had gone up the Mediterranean.

Four weeks from the day on which two of the abductors of Charity Green were conveyed to Charleston prison, a middle aged gentleman, whose luggage bore the way-marks of Havre and New York, entered the name of Richard Ormsby on the register of the Charleston Hotel. Steam annihilates distance in these rapid days. Made up by one of the most skillful costumers of the French metropolis, none would have mistaken the new comer for an eminent Divine. The snugly buttoned snuff-colored suit, the precise air, together with a certain foxy acuteness about the eyes, no less than the ready gold, and the habit of indulging in costliest viands and rarest wines, might have suggested the retired man of wealth, possibly a money lender, or the ex-steward of some great, foreign family. The Rector arrived in time.

CHAPTER XXXV.

MARIAN'S BETROTHAL.

Great peace crowned the waiting of Marian Deschamps. That life of truest heroism had not been without its trials. Her beautiful ideal was now shaped into the most plain and unpretending actual, with twenty-four little mouths to be fed, twenty-four little bodies to be clothed and duly cared for, twenty-four minds to be formed and cultured, and as many hearts to be set out in garden beds for Heaven's own quickening. The lovely heiress, thoroughly gifted with the rare faculty of carrying order into all departments of action, lived no dreamer's life. Hers was the true maxim, that no day is long enough for compliments, and that duty must preside over the hours and turn even the moments to best account. So her work throve. The tender children by this time began to repay her care in heart-growths of goodness, and their beautiful protector loved them as a rose tree warms toward its own blossoms.

All the details of the household were arranged with admirable exactness and the golden law of love made available as the incentive to action and its best reward. Marian soon began to be called "The Mother." At first one little thing, the youngest of all the orphans, lisped that angel name, and then, as by common consent, all the infant brood would use no other. The sensible English girl was no communist. The rights of mine and thine were studiously enforced. She aimed at making her charge simply plain, practical women. That highly wrought and exquisitely

endowed organization, alive to the utmost charm and magic of the beautiful in art and nature, supplied her through its receptive faculties with many a hint of the new and useful or the old and useful methods by which to promote the peace, concord and happiness of the family circle. No formalist, but recognizing the truth of the saying that "pictures are the books of the ignorant," she adorned the walls of the mansion, not with dark and dingy paintings of Saints on gridirons or moon-faced cherubs all head and feathers, but with works of art in which the beauty of the Christian's faith, its high sublimity and tender pathos and gentle courage were humanised to the view in radiant tints and harmonies; seeking thus to familiarise those apt and ready minds with her own trust in a future Heaven of large and loving action for the good and true.

A few days after the Christmas night which had witnessed such blithe and cheerful pageants at the Priory, a wee thing, toddling to her side and seeking a caress from the beautiful mother, whispered that a gentleman was at the door. The lady entered the drawing room at the summons of an attendant.

Then the lover beheld his mistress, not with the glance of the lad, to whom grace of person is the primal charm and the glory of the faithful spirit an unknown or dimly conjectured shadow; his was the look of one who has learned to prize the casket for its gem, the wealth of person for the worth of soul. The pure heart, feeding for seven years on daily manna dropped from Heaven, had communicated to the slender, graceful frame, purity, beauty and that nameless sweetness which is found only where the pearl of great price has been dissolved in the cup of the heart's affections. Pre-occupied with the day's duties, the maiden had not expected to find the suitor.

But she saw him, and the heart spoke. With a great leap it bounded as if to part the breast and melt into its

beloved. The suppressed emotions of seven years found vent. Love's ocean burst its barriers, and the tide, crimsoning the face, glowing on the lip's red petals, produced in its reaction faintness like death. The manly arms opened to clasp the treasure. With a murmured "Oh, Charlie!" the dear one swooned upon his breast.

It is a sad mistake to think that duty kills love; that those who live for highest purposes thrill less fondly to human nature's sweet humanities. Passion between boys and girls, though garlanded with exotics of sentiment, is but a moth that burns its wing in Hymen's candle, and flutters out a weary life. Love, in deep hearts, is like those wells of pure naphtha where the Parsee bows in reverence before the ever-burning flame. It lights with an immortal ray the cathedral silences of high resolve, and enrapt and incommunicable worship; but sparkles as well, with warm and cheerful radiance, on Hymen's altar in the paradise of home-delights. Marian knew this; and, while walking in the pathway of a noble purpose, felt that it was neither good for man nor woman to be alone. Hers was none of that unwomanliness which prates of the sufficiency of the sex to grow perfect in its own isolation. She felt the need of the man's mind, as every good man feels the need of the woman's heart, that the two might be absorbed into a composite existence, and made one. The true girl looked upon marriage, genuine marriage, not as the end of courtship, but as its sweet and tender dawn. So when Charles Bloomfield came, faithful in his vocation, faithful in his persistent, ever-growing attachment, he was welcomed with a response which swept in glowing circles from the soul. The heart spoke, while conscience and duty smiled, well pleased. The bliss of that reunion overpowered the exquisite faculties. A spring-tide of love and happiness diffused its joy-imparting flood through all the being; and the pure maiden fainted from heart-fullness, as the sorrowful and desolate do

from heart-loss. When recovering consciousness, with the head drooping on that manly breast, before the blushing countenance was lifted, and 'ere maiden timidity withdrew the trembling hand, she thought within herself, "This breast, if it please God, shall be my home forever;" and, while the thought had power to flush with new crimson the blooming cheek, an angel might have owned it in Heaven's innocence, nor seen a single spot upon his beamy crown.

Large and lustrous the evening star gazed through the window on the blissful pair. Evening star, orb of lovers in all ages and climes, surely it mingled with the air some especial dewiness and softness on that winter eve. It is difficult to chronicle the talk of lovers. Words were spoken there, out of the great deeps; words that bring no after repentance; words that good men love to utter; that good women love to hear; that live in memory afterward forever; that bring delight when they are first spoken, and that come and go through all the dim haunts and recesses of being, with an endless chime of bridal bells.

The light in Marian's deep blue eyes that evening was of unmingled joy. When the lover said, "Dearest, for seven years you have been my angel, and now I have come to ask you to be my wife," there was no affectation of unexpectedness or surprise; but as the fond heart found words it whispered, "I am all yours, Charlie, all yours." From that moment no hopes existed no plans were formed by one, in which the other did not share. When the suitor spoke of an early marriage, Marian answered modestly, "We will both seek of our dear Lord His blessing, and wait for our union till such a time as His Divine Providence shall indicate. For seven years I have sought to school my disposition to become burden-bearer and true help-meet. My first and highest end is to be faithful to my Heavenly Father. Hitherto He has led me by myself, but when it is

clear that my present state is to terminate, while still I live for Him, my husband, in Him, must be the guide. Kneeling together in the silence of the dimly lighted room, hand clasped in hand, they besought the Divine blessing on their betrothal. Then, with the consciousness of that sweet benediction, calmly and radiantly happy, in all the simplicity of childhood, an hour passed in such endearing communion as the affianced love.



CHAPTER XXXVI.

OBI AND A FLIGHT.

The schooner *Globe*, Haswell commander, of and for Tarrytown, with sundries to Master, sailed from the port of Charleston at twelve A. M. Not willing to leave the reader in the condition of the country lass, who inferred, from seeing his name so often in print among the arrivals and departures for foreign lands, that Sundries was a great traveler, we are willing to testify, with all due gravity, that sundries in this case was made up of cotton, turpentine, hemp bagging and four passengers. Haswell, Master, was a bluff old salt, past sixty, of the Newfoundland breed. Having spent the first twenty years of his life in cod and haddock fishing upon the grand banks, he was, in grizzled age, engaged in a general coasting trade, owning and sailing his own craft. The stout mariner left Charleston whistling for a gale, which soon whistled in return; and in forty hours the craft was tossing like an eggshell off Cape Hatteras.

There were four persons in the schooner's cabin, to whom we must introduce our readers. The round, fat man,—it now is dinner time,—who sits opposite the round of beef, is one Jacob Van Twigg, a worthy burgher of the town of Wiltsevelet. His venture of kidney potatoes, cabbages, prime Westchester county hams and sausages, the product of a farm on the Hudson, is returning in the shape of round half dollars in the old leathern trunk. Opposite sits Katrina Van Twigg, a buxom lass of the genius that Irving loves to paint with all the accuracy and mellow warmth

of Snyders or Teniers. Her fat and dimpled arms are cased in woollen mits and a cloth basque conceals an ample wealth of charms, which go far to disprove the doctrine that the old Netherlands have degenerated in the New. The nourishing qualities of oleykooks, slapjacks, schnits and flits, crullers and other immemorial trencher luxuries, prepared by deft and smiling Dutch dames, find in this specimen of womanhood developed under their potent hospitalities to a ripe, full beauty, a complete vindication.

Let Yankee Mehitables and Sally Anns reveal, in their own proper persons, the effects of Thanksgiving cheer, where cider foams under the insidious incentives of pearl-ash, and home-made Johnny-cake affords a basis for the crowning superstructure of pumpkin pie. Let Nova Scotia maidens, swift of foot, and hardy as the evergreen, with spicy breath dewy and odorous like the pine, forever establish the virtues of winter elk and moose, and spring trout, and autumn salmon, noblest of the finny tribe. Let Icelandic lasses, clad in sealskin, who watch during the long winter the coming and the going of the lover beneath the splendid coruscations of the aurora borealis,—let them, soft and yielding as the Eider-duck, attest that a dish of reindeer steak and cranberry sauce, with delicious pastries of the wild Arctic raspberry, is not without its commendable properties. But we say, in the language of Hans Bronk, Katrina's affianced lover, "Dutch girls and Dutch cheer, Dutch cheer and Dutch girls, one and inseparable, now and forever."

In good sooth, reader, our Annekes and Katrinas of the New Netherlands, compared with their prototypes of the old whom one sees in wooden shoes and scarlet petticoats in the fat pastures of Holland fens, are as the glossy wild duck, bright of eye and swift of wing, floating in his own pellucid mountain tarn, to some quacking namesake of the poultry-yard. Rebecca Van Awlstyne of famous memory, who, in

the year 1662, bestowed her sixteen petticoats and sixteen years on Dominus Jacobus Van Schoonhoven, long remembered from remote Dirrup, loneliest of frontier towns, to Pavonian shores and oyster beds, left many a fair descendant to perpetuate her beauty to remotest time,—here again blooming out in this fair, Guelders rose.

Mynheer Van Twiggle is rotundity amplified and exaggerated; Katrina is plumpness softened and aerialised. Much do I opine that many a gallant bachelor who reads this page would have been willing to learn Hudson river Dutch to have had the privilege of sitting beside the blushing Katrina, on the wide stoop of the Van Twiggle domicile, when the whip-poor-will was calling from the dusky shadows, and sealing the ratification of a marriage troth-plight upon those pouting lips. Ah! Katrina.

But there were two other inmates of the cabin of the good schooner *Globe* of Tarrytown, Haswell, Master. Have we fairies here? Peter Lely painted Mary Devereux, first of that name who ever graced the stately Hall of Riverside, daughter of the gay Lionel who supplanted the old Wallingfords, in the costume of the Fairy Queen. For once, whiled away from Whitehall and the boisterous scenes of court life, he had recalled a reminiscence of youth's romance, beneath the spreading beeches of Riverside Park. The sight of this airy maiden, just in the dawning beauty of her teens, haunting those sequestered glades, startling the deer in the thickets, herself shy and tender as a fawn, had kindled up a flickering, mystic brightness upon the altar of the artist's mind. Court beauties and court favor, court vices and court fashions too, were, for the time, forgotten. So he dipped the pencil in that sacred light and painted this wild maiden as a guest from fairy land. She stands in the picture, which still hangs in the banqueting hall at Riverside, just lit upon a sunny bank, carpeted with spring flowers, with gauzy winglets half unfurled, her

hand reached forth and in the act of gathering a rosebud. Has some daring Prometheus of our wondrous age summoned that aerial creature from the canvas, and gifted her, all miraculously clad in raiment of this world's wear, with breathing life? Oh! the Past, which the Iconoclast thinks to burn out from human memory! He may defile its altars, apply the brand to its most sacred temples and shatter its glorious images with the Vandal's heavy axe. He thinks to slay the Past! Vain and visionary scheme, while human nature lives, and old time genius, valor, worth and love, step forth through mystic gates of birth to sun themselves in the light of living centuries. So, in this delicate maiden, seated in the cabin of the Globe, we behold a breathing counterpart of the Mary, whom Peter Lely painted two hundred years ago.

The schooner Globe of Tarrytown, Haswell master, was a fast sailer. Pitching in the cross seas off Cape Romain, skimming like a gull past stormy Hatteras, still northward sped the fleet craft, dropping at last her anchors inside Sandy Hook. Through half formed ice-floes, swaying hither and thither with the changes of the tide; sometimes feeling her way along the winding channels; then again wedged in for whole hours; past snow covered shores and jutting points adorned with cedar and arbor vitæ; past a mighty city and miles of shipping lying at piers and bulk-heads; then again through quiet, rural scenes, with stately palaces crowning the hilltops, and the merry sound of sleigh-bells tingling on the frosty air; through falling snowflakes, melting as they drop on the rosy cheeks and pouting lips of merry girls, like the pearls of Cleopatra that dissolved at the first touch of the crimson vintage, and so, through a thousand dangers, safe at last, moored at the little dock at Tarrytown, the bluff seaman greeted his passengers with a "Welcome home."

Merrily had rung the church bells from distant Yonkers,

for it was the Sabbath day, the Sabbath morning, clear and bright and beautiful. The village streets were white as if carpeted with silver lilies. A light snow had fallen over night. On the deck of the vessel, as she moored at the wharf, stood a comely quadron woman, dressed in humble yet befitting attire. A graceful young lady stood by her side. Who were they? The Globe, Haswell master, keeps a close mouth over all that transpires in its cabins. The brown rice-bird flies northward from the swamps of Carolina, and, when he reaches these broad Hudson meadows, appears a gentleman cavalier, in black and gold. Robert of Lincoln he is styled, though irreverent urchins contract the name to Bob o' Link, just as General Zachary Taylor, President of the United States, hears noisy roysterers at political gatherings rehearsing the exploits of Old Zack.

Peal on glad bells, waking troops of echoes from these snow-clad hills, without a note of sadness in them all. Call out the worshipers from homestead and cottage and mansion. Meanwhile let us whisper, dear reader, how one bird of passage, Bob o' Link fashion, with good cloak of black velvet, and gold in the purse, for all the jaunty hat and glossy whiskers and polished boots, was but a plain rice bird. Soon, in these high latitudes, patent leather gives place to plain morocco and gaudy vest to befitting boddice, while cloak of velvet is supplanted by gray mantle and close gathered hood. The dark woman fears the Obi, trembles at the curse that overhangs the house of Lucretia Lorne, and flies from it ere it falls.

The keeping room of the Van Twiggie mansion witnessed a courting scene that night. Young Hans Bronk, about six o'clock, drove up in gaudy sleigh and warm buffaloes, his good heart beating pit-a-pat faster than the fleet horses' hoofs dinted the white road, faster than the ice sparkles flew. This was Katrina's affianced lover.

Reader, did you ever hear a Dutch kiss? Frow Van Twiggie thought the yeast bottle had popped in the pantry, and then shook her jolly sides and gave the fine black eyes an extra twinkle, as she remembered Katrina's father and twenty-five years ago. Merrily frothed the cider in the great brown pitcher; merrily crackled the hickory, and the long candles on the mantle piece looked at each other and nodded their wicks approvingly, as much as to say "Won't we spark it to-night."

The old, Dutch clock in the corner, that ticked the hour when Katrina's mother and grandmother were married before her, intimated to the farmer's watch, when they compared time afterward, that the couple parted at just three, and the remains of the spitzenbergs and crullers declared that it must have been about that time for the second candles had just burned out. Oh! flame of love, wilt thou ever burn out, when the spitzenbergs and crullers of life's glad, hospitable feast are dwindled to scanty handfulls, and coldly sleep the white ashes that once were glowing and ruddy embers upon the sacred hearth? wilt thou too wane and flicker and smoulder away? or is this life, to the good, but a short courting night, and then a brief parting, wherein the bridegroom shall make himself ready for the bride?

Old Virginia is not far from old New Amsterdam, in the primitive neighborhoods that retain something of the habits of the seventeenth century. Negro character is the same everywhere. Miles Wallingford was no abolitionist as the times go; that is, he had been denounced as a slaveholder in disguise, and recreant to the first principles of freedom, in the columns of the "Demopolis Promulgator." Nevertheless when Cæsar Boerman, his old body servant, carried out the coffee one Monday morning the darkie's face wore an additional glow and in fact was illuminated with ebony sunshine.

"Massa," he said, "dat ere ohile of mine am a spiled

nigger. Dat ere Quaker Hogeboom up at Coeymans, hab him in his employ as de coachman. Well Sambo, him a dandy chile, him up to courting a gal named Dinah in dem ere parts. So he says to de Quaker "Massa Hogeboom, we hab de honna of requesting your consent to our connubial ceremonies. On de fourth of February we specks de grand junction." De Quaker answered "Sambo dere are particular reasons why thou shouldst not marry Dinah. If thou dost do it I shall discharge thee from my employ." Den Sambo, he turned pale, and said, "Massa Hogeboom, dere am particular reasons why I should marry Dinah: I lubs her and she lubs me." Den Massa Hogeboom turned on him heel and replied, while him shadbelly coat and broad hat looked awful at the darkie, "Nay Sambo, thou must not take her. Verily, if thou dost I shall discharge thee on the spot." Now Massa Wallingford, de chile's heart's nigh about broke. Shall he marry Dinah? dat is de question."

Our friend, Miles Wallingford believes in the practical; so does Bushwig, but they interpret the word in a different way. To do the practical, in the Rector's theory, consists in helping yourself at the expense of others. In the young editor's sense it consists in doing a good turn generally to all who require it; so he answers, "I'll put Sambo in the way of earning a house and lot. When he has furnished it we will have a grand wedding. Is not he the boy who did the singing for us last summer." A bob of the head from Cæsar and a loud guffaw, "Golly, Massa Wallingford, I knew you'd fix de chile. Dare be him and six odder darkies dat play de bones, and dance and act de minstrels." "Very well," replied Miles, "send him here." In this manner came into existence the famous "Columbian Minstrels," a company of genuine Ethiopians. As John Kemble did Falstaff without stuffing, so these did Ethiopians without blacking. They had simply to undisguise themselves. It was a pleasant evening pastime for their friend

and patron to ransack a portfolio for a few simple, unpretending rhymes, that the serenaders might stand before the world on a Shaksperian basis of warranted originality. Then, recommending them in his paper, with a merry jest, they went starring it through the county. The thing took, especially as Sambo entered into the fun with downright earnest, and played the banjo mightily, with Dinah for the prospective prize. The Yonkers Flag Staff, the Cobleskill Banner of Liberty and The Sleepy-Hollow Republican, all joined in the chorus, and Sambo and his minstrels drew nightly houses. In due time the darkie's wedding crowned the enterprise.

It was a few weeks after this that a young girl timidly knocked for admittance at the sanctum of the Editor, with a slender roll of manuscript in her hand. Miles was sad that morning, a yearning home-sickness was preying upon his heart. The fine head resting upon the table, in deep dejection. Copy had been called for in vain. It was impossible to return into the actual world; the spirit, however much he might load down its wings with daily care, seemed rising into a vast atmosphere, filled with a divine breath from the minds of all the ages. The practical man was for once ideal. The mind exulted in spite of outward depression, in a sense of boundless expansion. "Oh!" he cried, "for a life of great labors for worthy and permanent interests. We make of politics a game. The everlasting laws of right are ignored in favor of mere partisan requirements. The moment that we attempt to interest the masses in favor of principles, they cease to follow us. A strip of bunting has more power over them than a thought that might make dead heroes burst their tombs. Still it is the old cry over again, 'National glory acquired by trampling on the weak.' Madame Roland said that 'Freedom was but a name;' and it is but a name, until men meekly accept the fiat of a Divine power. There is a higher

liberty than that which our people boast in ; but, oh ! how shall men be quickened to perceive that, unless they are the freemen of Christ's commonwealth, they are but slaves who dance to the jingling of their fetters. I see that I must break with my party, with all parties, if I dare to follow out my highest convictions. I cannot be an independent journalist, it would seem, in this atmosphere. What is one man against an army of hungry politicians. The Divine sacredness of the Editor's function appalls me,—makes me tremble. When I whisper in the ear of my God I lay bare my breast, I dare not lie to Him ; but when I whisper through these silent types, from farm house to farm house, am I honest as with my God, or am I not?" Again the head drooped, the lips moved in prayer.

The Rubicon which Cæsar crossed was a narrow stream. He could only pass through it armed, to find himself militant against his native city. Miles Wallingford, in that act of prayer, had crossed his Rubicon. Henceforth he was an armed man, sworn to be God's soldier with the pen, as were his ancestors with the sword. Silent and unawares a great inspiration had taken possession of that nature, to live at any cost for the eternal politics of right, to cross weapons with any, however powerful, whose policy was the demoralization of party.

On this lonely winter morning, a slender maiden paused at the Editor's door. A slight rap, a hearty call "Come in," and Charity Green stood amidst the files of papers. He is half away yet, but vaguely conscious that a lady is present. The first tones of the clear, silvery voice recall him back to duties in this world. The young lady, prettily blushing now, to find herself in the presence of comely youth, timidly places a roll of manuscript upon the table and says, "Sir, If it is not too late I have brought a story."

Six weeks before, the Tarrytown Patriot had offered a prize of a hundred dollars for a novellette. At the end of

the week, the present week, a committee was to meet for the purpose of deciding upon the merits of the respective manuscripts that might be offered.

Miles Wallingford had never been in love. When taxed with the fact at cotillions and sleighing parties, he was wont, laughingly, to reply that "He had no time;" nor was he in love now, though when his eyes met those of the unknown maiden, mere school girl as she seemed, there slid a strange sense of comfort into the soul.

I recollect, when a little fellow, of dreaming that I looked into my mother's eyes and saw in each, as I gazed, a world, —one brilliant as the sun and full of rich and glowing day, the other all gentle and silvered with soft brightness like the lustre of the full moon. Each became in that childish vision a tiny Paradise set in beautiful skies of lucid azure light; then it was like looking into a distant landscape, with villages interspersed with Summer gardens and green and quiet woods, and in these villages dwelt the little people. They swung from the branches of the maples and elms, rocked to and fro in pearly flower cups, sailed upborne in air by brilliant butterflies, or gathered sweets from oxlip and carnation, or danced upon the grass with twinkling, merry feet. Then I woke to muse about the fairies in my dear mother's eyes, and, when she took me on her knees and held me to her heart and kissed me, I thought, young dreamer that I was, that from every bright glance and dewy gleam some little sentient essence, all quivering with love and joy, was fluttering down to make its home within my breast.

So Miles Wallingford felt amidst the dusty newspaper that dark January day. A something had gone down to his soul, tripping with airy feet and lighting up its solitude with beamy face and wings.

Loyal to his dear mother's memory, the youth had learned to treat every woman as a sister. He had not one

voice for the sweetheart and another for the washerwoman. Speaking, then, in the usual and natural tone, he bade her to a seat. The proffered courtesy was gracefully declined. Holding in his hand the manuscript the young man's answer came, deep and musical: "It is not too late, Miss. Your story will receive, I trust, a fair reading. Should you be successful I hope to have the pleasure of informing you of it soon." Her address was written upon the envelope, Katrina Van Twiggie, Wiltsevleet.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

DUTCH COURTINGS.

The mild, Winter interval called the January thaw had flooded the brooks and left bare the hill-sides. Bridges were washed away, roads almost impassable, but on Sunday night, and ten miles through crushed, half melted ice and muddy clay, came the editor of the Tarrytown Patriot and reached the broad stoop of the Van Twiggie mansion at the going down of the sun.

I did not make Hudson River customs; they were imported from the Zuyder Zee with Van Rensselaer and Stuyvesant and Van Cortlandt in days when still the beaver had his lodges and the red Indian built his wigwam within eye shot of the roof-tree of the Van Twiggie's. If they will persist in sparking on Sunday nights through all these ancient regions of which St. Nicholas is the protecting genius, the habit was sanctioned by Dutch Dominies before our grandmothers wore pinafores. Velvet doublets and padded hose, powdered cues and silver buckles are but traditions now, yet old time customs still remain. We are in fine spirits at the Van Twiggie mansion. Katrina has capitulated and the wedding day is fixed, Thursday being a lucky day by the Almanac, the parson has been spoken to and the fiddler not forgotten. For reader, they dance on these old Chestnut floors. The Netherlandish damsels brought the custom in the ship that carried Cupid and his fortunes, and their fair descendants, in blush and bloom the same, "bear loveliest weight on lightest foot," and rustle in

modern finery, moving in happy motion like apple blossoms that the west wind shakes.

Mr. Wallingford meets the heir of the Bronks at the gate, both with splashed horses and besprinkled coats. Let us follow them in. Our friend Hans finds his way into the huge kitchen, gives mother in law expectant a hearty smack and learns that 'Trinie will soon appear. Our friend Wallingford is ushered into the keeping room. It is not Katrina who meets the vision. Close the door on this meeting of young hearts.

The girl who has been courted from a tender April of faint hope till the high harvest noon of matrimony sends before it a coming brightness, trips lightly down the back stairs and beckons the swain who has trodden through those delectable vallies with her to a mysterious conference.— Soon a fire is lit in a spare parlor, usually opened only once a year, and four happy people are taking tea. Oh! reader, I did not make these Dutch customs. Apple butter and ham and eggs, quince preserves and honey dripping from the comb, the whitest of potted cherries and the yellowest of brandy peaches, flaky biscuits crisp and tender from the oven, hot waffles, mince pie and coffee that diffuses an aroma of Arabia the blessed, make a meal that Beauty presides over while youthful appetite partakes. If you do not believe it, take the first Cunarder for New York and journey inland ten miles on the east bank of the Hudson, at any point within range of the Catskills or on the shores of the Tappan Zee.

The story having won the prize, the young Editor, true to his promise, has brought its golden recompense to the blushing contributor. I admit that it seems improbable; but remember, reader, that our Charity has lived more years of feeling and experience in her scant fifteen winters, than many who linger at ripe threescore and ten. She had simply to sketch a scene drawn from one of the cabinets of

her own eventful life. The story of Neeshema, veiled in graceful drapery of words, concealing places and revealing facts, written, too, with a high purpose, that of showing how the touch of the Divine Love causes springs to gush out of the desert of a betrayed and broken-hearted life,—written true to nature, yet in a style which can only come by gift from Heaven,—this was the bridge over which two souls journeyed to know and understand each other.

Wallingford perused the tale of Neeshema when the day's long labors were at an end; and, at its close, with an involuntary motion, he pressed the silent pages to his heart. Confiding to none his intent, pure in purpose, and earnest in this as in all other things, he sought the unknown authoress; and, oh! what a disappointment! Was this the strange, bright being whose genius had put blood into words, and coined sentences that flashed like the gleam of sabres before the mind's eye? this diffident and shrinking lass, whose lip and eye and cheek all told the same plain story,—a soul as unconscious of its own latent power as the June rosebud of its fragrance? Whence had she this wisdom, for she had never learned?

Again I say, reader, Dutch customs are none of my invention. It was Hans Bronk's last courting night. The clock ticked; the hickory sputtered; the candles nodded and blinked; the doughnuts nudged each other in the tray; the jolly pippins and Spitzenbergs grew mellow to be eaten, and Dutch Cupid blew out his puffy cheeks, as, smoking the pipe of meditation, he perched invisibly on the oaken clock-case, and rubbed his chubby hands and glanced approval.

But Dutch Cupid, whose eye penetrates with roguish merriment through thickest walls, was not content to tarry long in that familiar place. English Cupid made his appearance; the Cupid that the boy Shakspeare saw in rosy dreams beside the banks of Avon; the Cupid with the high brow and the curved lips divine; the Cupid whose arrows are tipped

with golden fire, and whose bow is strung with a chord from Apollo's own harp; the Cupid whose dominions reach out into all that fair visioned realm where Imagination, the boy-god, keeps high court forever. The two brothers met, and, while they whisper apart, let us try to overhear a word.

DUTCH CUPID: "Hans and 'Trinie."

ENGLISH CUPID: "Hush! A boon, mighty monarch. Reach out thy pipe-sceptre and be gracious while I touch the tip. Thine is the Van Twiggle mansion, and thy doves have made its roof-tree their especial roost. Lend me this snuggerly, for here we have a brace of lovers like callow skylarks in their shells."

DUTCH CUPID: "Yah, Yah, Mynheer, 'Trinie shall be sparked in de oder room."

ENGLISH CUPID: "Take the crullers and the spitzenbergs and the big pitcher with you, brother Dutchman. I myself will provide the feast."

DUTCH CUPID, resembling a brother Cheeryble in miniature, trolls:

"Rolliches and oleykooks,
Better be than poet's books."

ENGLISH CUPID, a slender youth like Mercury, star-browed with azure helm, replies:

"Better than the earthen bowl
Is the flowing wine of soul."

"Tic-tac-tic-tac-tic-tac"—says the clock in the corner, "Time flies."

Cheeryble Cupid points to the vacant throne and flies to find Hans and 'Trinie, who wait his presence, smiling, as he goes, a jolly adieu.

Mercury Cupid waves his wand. In come the fairies who once danced on Avon's stream. Katrina remembers that

Hans grows drowsy about twelve and needs refreshments. Dutch courting fare vanishes in her chubby hands.

The ruins of an old mill stand upon the Wiltsevleet Kill. The brick walls, built in old, continental days, yet remain. The pond lilies fringe the edge of the deep pool above. It was a famous place for speckled trout. There Miles Wallingford had angled when a lad. Of this old mill a singular tradition existed. Anthony Vanzandt, its builder, it was said, had married an Indian girl. A brave of the tribe, who had courted her in vain, fired the mill one night, and they were both consumed in the flames. At the anniversary of the burning, so ran the legend, the wild war-whoop might still be heard ringing in the thicket, and then a lurid light would seem to play above the tottering ruins. Hollow groans would reverberate, mingling strangely with the crash of falling timbers, and then all grow still, while, as the unearthly flame expired, two shadowy phantoms, one pallid as the white mist, the other rosy as the red dawn, might slowly be seen ascending and melting away in vapory nothingness, as the black eddies of the pool caught the first gleam of morning.

Miles Wallingford narrated the legend that evening, while the shy maiden listened with her sweet eyes cast modestly down. A young widow would have been at her ease, and played the Editor as he would a trout, but artless nature blushed in simple girlhood, and trembled, all unconscious that this was wooing, thinking only that the gallant and noble youth was drawing near to take a brother's place within her heart. This is an old trick of master Cupid's.

Now Charity was artlessness itself, and yet no cunning widow, with all her skill, could have played a shrewder game. Unaccustomed to conceal likes or dislikes, she thought that she perhaps had found a brother put her at entire ease, and, on the strength of this sensation of a

brotherly and sisterly kindness between them, the restraint which affects strangers passed away.

Thrown out upon the wide world we soon learn to distinguish between enemies and friends, and Innocence is treble guarded, because this primal instinct remains unblunted. Brighter sparkled the hickory, cheerier gleamed the tall candles, while English Cupid called his fairy train to dance in airy circles around the pair and fill their hearts with silent blisses of a new-born joy.

At last the lovely English girl became frank and social. A sweet sense of home comfort filled the room. Our friend the Editor had the tact to make her at ease. Nevertheless curiosity kept whispering "Who is she?" Soon the gallant took courage to say, "I am sure that I have found a dear friend and must tell her something of myself." The fine face kindled, and he spoke of boyhood and its pleasures in the old Wallingford mansion. One by one the closed leaves of the soul expanded like some rare flower, and, before he knew it, the silent thoughts that even now were shaping destiny took form in words and stood arrayed in living images before the maiden's mind.

Confidence calls for a return. With half shut eyes, as if recalling from the past dim and fluctuating memories, the lovely mystery replied, "Mr. Wallingford, I am a gipsy girl, born in Europe, abandoned by a reckless uncle in a farm-house on Long Island, driven from that shelter by ill treatment, found in a hopeless, suffering state by a family of Indians, and educated by them to make baskets and earn my bread."

The young man drew closer; his soul was deeply moved. She continued: "This Neeshema was a real character, and the story of her early life, the blight that fell upon it and her final, happy death, is true. Her sufferings excited the sympathy of a benevolent gentleman in Connecticut, who placed me under the charge of an estimable Quaker lady,

preceptress of a seminary in the same place. How I left her care it is impossible for me to say. For some cause, I know not what, I must have been stolen. I recollect retiring to my room in her pleasant cottage. I awoke in a close carriage guarded by two persons whom I never recollect to have seen before. I next found myself in a city which I learned afterward was Charleston, surrounded with every luxury but utterly secluded. Here I became aware that a great peril threatened me; but a slave woman who was my gaoler, and who is now in this house, found means for our escape upon a coasting vessel. Miss Katrina took an interest in us, being also a passenger, and, on arriving at the little village to which the schooner was bound, insisted that we should remain with her for a time."

We have seen that the grand element in Miles Wallingford's nature was chivalry. It is this that makes the gentleman. Its essence consists in the protection of the weak against the strong. There was nothing in the story that suggested to his mind the idea that Charity was more than she had said, a helpless gipsy lass; but he was sweetly content to vow himself in secret her life's guardsman.

Lover's instinct whispered that this treasure must be guarded with sleepless vigilance. The high-born gentleman spoke when he addressed her again. It was as if the mother's soul looked through the boy's eyes. His glances read the noble spirit, that, wrapt in vails of beautiful and maidenly reserve, had yet disclosed, without fear, its lowly origin, its uncertain and eventful history. Had Charity been the great lady in disguise a lofty pride might have spoken; as it was, no vassal, approaching crowned lady on bended knee, could have evinced more perfect reverence.

She held a little, worn book. He saw the sacred name upon it, and remarked, "He who walked through earth in form the lowliest, yet reigns in Heaven high above the highest, has said that we must be little children. Charity,

my friend, I will be as a child with you. The history which you have so freely confided to me is one that it might not be safe to repeat to others, nor is the servant of whom you speak safe even in this shelter. Her master or mistress may reclaim her, nor can our laws interpose any obstacle. You are clearly in non-age, and therefore it may be that your abductors acted under the color of authority. We cannot fathom this secret, but enough is given us to enforce the necessity for silence. I, too, am young, and therefore, perhaps, not fully competent to advise, though living in contact with worldly men and mingling in their pursuits has furnished an experience which otherwise I could not have obtained. You came in the *Globe*. It is known in Charleston that she sails to and from the village of Tarrytown. Even now the quadroon woman may have been traced to this house." This was indeed the case.

"I cannot judge with entire discretion of the course which ought to be pursued, unless the servant is willing to inform me all that she may know of the circumstances connected with your abduction. There is no time to be lost. Should she be reclaimed as a runaway, arrangements must be made to remove her from pursuit until, if possible,—for I would not interfere with my country's law,—we may negotiate her freedom."

Overhead paced Zulette, for she could not sleep. Something seemed whispering "Up, up, for you are needed!" We must now resume the thread of our narrative in another place.

CHAPETR XXXVIII.

THE MIDNIGHT CRY.

Lucretia Lorne paced to and fro in her boudoir, after the flight, like a tigress robbed of its whelp. Five weeks had elapsed since the slave, Zulette, had disappeared, bearing away the innocent cause of all this gathering tragedy from that scene of guilt and woe. Madame had not been idle. A skillful detective, employed with strictest secrecy, had traced the missing quadroon, under a familiar disguise, to the schooner *Globe*, of Tarrytown. Sent on with documents empowering him to reclaim the fugitive, he had written to his employer that a reasonable certainty existed that she might be recovered.

No other changes had occurred in that respectable family. Still, in the grandly-furnished parlors, dignified and opulent gentlemen were occasionally seen in the bewitching society of lovely and accomplished ladies. The servants, as of old, were obsequious, the hostess charming and agreeable. No thunderbolt had fallen.

Peter Styles had disappeared. Where was Peter? Handy Ben and his friend Major Chelmsford, alias Cunning Joe, have obtained release from prison under heavy bail. Spring is coming, and tiny voices from snowdrop and violet blow their elf-land bugles. A softer breath is on the air. Consumptives who have come here from bleak New England, lean languidly at open windows to inhale the fresh, reviving breath. The buds are swollen upon the peach trees,

and here and there a faint crimson petal is half blown. It promises to be an early spring.

The voluptuous evening dress of the keeper of the Harem, in strict conformity with Parisian propriety and taste, suggests the exquisite outlines of a faultless person, and befits her style of beauty, as its snowy plumage becomes the swan. True, the dark line under each full eye is a little darker; the sinister smile that, spite of will, makes its appearance around the full lips, betrays a little more of the devil. The white brow will settle into a frown when no one gazes at it, but the cheeks wear their peach bloom, the dark hair is as glossy, the voice as bland, the manner as caressing as a month ago. Still lurks the keen poniard within those dainty muslin folds, and, as the golden fingers of the diamond watch turn slowly onward, night and day, the curved blade feels that edge and point are perfect, and lies there as if in silent foreknowledge of a use that is to be. And still the heart feels the cold steel of the scabbard, and still it listens to the metallic click and the friction of the delicate machinery, while the drops of ruby see which shall run the fastest, they or the eddying moments that circle on the dial-plate, and ooze away in Time's unfathomed void.

Mr. Ormsby, at home in commodious quarters at the Charleston Hotel, is soon on pleasant and social terms with frank-hearted planters and busy merchants, who there congregate. A quiet rubber of whist with one, a chat over the bottle with another; and then an invitation is given, and accepted, to a little Euchre party and a frolic at Madame Lorne's.

There are three others whom we must follow for a moment, and the first is Peter Styles. Returning to the prison of the heiress on the morning after the eventful day which witnessed in its gray twilight the capture of Handy Ben and the confinement of the two in the city prison upon the charge of various burglaries, Peter Styles reentered the

house to find its keeper in a tumult of excitement and alarm. In a few words she narrated the escape of Zulette and the abduction of the heiress.

Her plans were evidently baffled. This emergency she had not foreseen. How to escape from the dilemma in which she found herself involved was no easy matter. Tofton was delirious in a secluded part of the house. Confiding as much of the story as was prudent to eminent counsel, she followed advice, which was to make no change in her manner of living, to recover if possible the missing servant, to detain Tofton, now prostrate with a low fever, and, on the recovery of the young lady to proceed with her immediately to her European relatives. With great difficulty convincing Styles that Zulette had really absconded taking with her Rosa, she succeeded in persuading him at last to a strict secrecy. Kept out of her confidence so far as related to the departure of the fugitives upon the *Globe* the wary Englishman feigned entire acquiescence in the lady's measures, and, while maturing his plans, carefully transcribed the eventful particulars of his visit to Charleston and mailed them at once to Dr. Hartwell.

The mild days of February were now at hand; Tofton rapidly recovering and all his acute and crafty brain scheming with a two-fold purpose, escape and vengeance; but feigning delirium still, now that he was recovered from it in reality. The felon was entirely unaware of any event beyond the precincts of his own room, nor was he indeed conscious of the weeks that had elapsed during this temporary madness.

The release of Cunning Joe and Handy Ben, who, after more than a month's confinement had succeeded in obtaining discharge upon bail, though instantly they had left the city, or, if there, were concealed, put an end to the momentary breathing spell during which Madame Lorne had been

concerting future measures. Henceforth the domicile was guarded with more jealous care.

How passed the time with the gentleman's gentleman meanwhile? He was conscious of being never without a watcher. The room, to which he had been removed during an unconscious condition, unlike the first, was fitted for a prison. Here Charity Green had passed the long and weary months. The first thought was that he might escape from the window, but the gratings, of iron and thoroughly secured, convinced the seeker that this was not the road to liberty. Within the alcove occupied by the couch he discovered, on close examination, and set within the wall, an open tube so fashioned as to convey the sound of the very breathings to some other apartment, so that its inmate could not move without being heard. The quick mind, stimulated by the search, perceived another and another in the outer apartment. Food was conveyed to the prisoner, as strength began to return, by means of a dumb waiter, and the diet, scanty and mucilaginous, was barely sufficient for a child. Convinced that the scratch of a pin in that apartment might be heard, still he did not despair.

Not an article of previous attire had been left, else he might have taken watch-springs and lancets from the boot-soles, and delicate cutting and turning implements of the burglars' trade besides. An ivory comb and an elegant Parisian brush were the only materials upon which the eye rested when seeking to fashion instruments to aid in the effort for deliverance. The captive feigned death; even this failed. At the end of two days the food which remained upon the dumb waiter tempted him. Emaciated almost to a skeleton he still trusted his rogues' star. At length a brilliant thought flashed upon the mind. They might not have searched the mattress. Perhaps some former occupant,—who knows?—had left concealed a weapon there. With noiseless fingers, snoring heavily meanwhile, as if in deep

sleep, feeling the way along the corded seams, he touched at last an orifice made apparently by the accidental parting of the threads. Rendered doubly vigilant the agitated man waited till the dead hour of the night and felt again, thence drawing forth,—prize most precious,—an instrument hidden there by Cunning Joe. With it the burglar knew that no lock could bar the road to freedom, however strong might be its bolts. Chelmsford had taken the precaution, in a state of partial sanity intervening between paroxysms, to place this means of regaining his liberty in a hiding place against the time when it should be safe to make the effort. He was quietly conducted to prison before that hour arrived, little thinking that the weapon was left to serve an accomplice in the same peril.

Mr. Ormsby played euchre well. Holding the right bower and ace of trumps he smiled to see his opponent, Col. Lenoir, chuckling warily, inferring from it that the planter held the left bower and the king. The parlor in which they were sitting beheld high play sometimes. A roulette of sovereigns lay upon the table, and, opposite, a tempting show of crisp and freshly-issued bank notes. Madame entered at the moment, while her keen eye glittered. Gold was the wanton's idol.

"Be seated, gentlemen," was the lady's salutation, waving a courtesy with her jeweled hand, and then she laughed a merry, ringing laugh.—I wonder if they ever laugh in hell.

One rapid glance in the mirror, and then a smile full of meaning at the foreign gentleman. Oh! temptress, temptress! Even then, did not the jeweled poniard stir within its folds? Even then, did not the heart laugh merrily at its golden neighbor, playing their euchre game with death's heads on the cards.

Quietly Mr. Ormsby placed his stake, the entire rouleau, midway on the slender stand. Madame turned, and, taking

from the liveried servant, who now entered, a tray, bearing goblets, touched with the rosy tips of her fingers the loosened cork of the champagne flask. The Colonel quietly met his opponent's gold, carelessly pushing the bits of crumpled paper to their place. The goblets foamed as the lady of the mansion waited on her guests, and, while the good wine blushed at finding itself opened and drank in that place, the planter rose with a careless jest at his ill luck. Neither seemed to care for the prize of victory now that the game was at an end.

The Carolinian knew the conventionalities of the house, and accosting his foreign friend with a polite bow and a whisper, left the room. O, Satan loves polished vice! The sin that sparkles in jewels and that writes "Honorable" before its name is winked at by the world. He would have it so.

The lady remained standing. The polished gentleman, her *vis-a-vis*, glanced at his repeater, and now the artful wanton, calling to her aid the honeyed smile that had beguiled scores before to ruin, pointed to the table and said, "Our friend has been unfortunate; the gods have smiled upon your side of the house. We must not allow you to carry away hearts as well." Mr. Ormsby smiled in reply, and, waving the hand, rejoined, "The stake is nothing, Madame. The play beguiles an hour. Let it serve as a slight acknowledgment of an evening happily spent." It was now the lady's turn: "We shall take you for a prince in disguise, Mr. Ormsby. If you win money we lose hearts." It was now midnight.

Madame Lorne had a suspicion that her guest was no banker,—no retired merchant. The cloth betrays itself. Bad men assume Holy Orders for professional ends,—for motives of lucre or ambition, but soon acquire a manner of address, from performing sacred rites, which stamps them as peculiar and separated from their fellows. "This man,"

thought the wanton, "is, or has been, an eminent Divine." The lady jumped at conclusions. "What if it be the Rev. Dr. Bushwig?" With quick mother wit she saw a mode of testing him, and availed herself of it. Looking the guest in the eyes, like a naughty schoolgirl who is about to confess a fault to an indulgent master, half dropping a courtesy, she whispered, "Can you shrive a fair penitent, Sir?" The incognito took the meaning and colored to the eyes, and now the siren laid a soft hand upon his arm and observed again, "These walls tell no tales. I did but shoot a chance arrow. You shall be my confessor, at least, and, to all the rest of the world, nobleman incog."

Old Philostratus tells a story in his life of Apollonius of a fair woman who met by the roadside a silly youth, and wooed him to his ruin. She had palaces and gardens, and perfumed banqueting halls, and for beauty was like a goddess in disguise. So the young man followed her home, and she changed into a serpent, and all that splendor proved but witch-work and illusion, and when the lamia's arts were detected she poisoned the captive with her venomous breath, and left him but a "slovenly, ill-mannered corse."

The fascinations that had overcame the prudence of Cuning Joe did not find the Rector of Richmanstown invulnerable. "Come," said the lady, with an artless and bewitching glance, "it is too soon to part yet. A coach is always at your service when you wish to leave us." Did she mean that which the low voice added, "You will never repent hearing my confession." Sure enough. Who ever does repent when Death takes them from Sin's own palace gates, and the recording angel closes up his book and bears it where the histories of all men lie gathered before the awful presence of the final Judge?

"At the midnight there was a cry made, 'behold, the bridegroom cometh.'"

The purpose of Madame Lorne had been at first to avail

herself simply of the Rector's presence in her house, for the purpose of putting him entirely off his guard by pretended acquiescence in all his plans. Knowing herself to be encompassed by deadly and determined enemies, and fearing to add one more to the number, she affected entire unreserve.

No sooner was the guest seated in that secluded boudoir, all the world shut out, than, rousing up every power for the occasion, the wanton drew a crimson fauteuil to his side, seated herself upon it, reposed the ringleted head upon his knees for a moment, and then began, "If I am not mistaken, Sir, I see before me a gentleman for whom I entertain the most profound respect. If report has not belied me to you, I am understood as a lady, who, though unfortunate circumstances may have forced into a mode of life which is not considered reputable, remains without personal reproach. Pardon me, then, if I ask, do I have the honor of saluting Dr. Bushwig?"

Had Brazennose college been christened Brazenface our Rector might have been appropriately its graduate. Resting his hand caressingly upon the curls of the fair penitent, he answered, "My dear Madame, this is a wicked world; but we are not so bad as we seem. I find one of the loveliest of her sex placed here by the dint of circumstance in a very equivalent position; but this sweet face, I am sure, must be the index to a noble heart."—Which holds the right bower in this game.—"You may call me as you will. I think I may say at least, I am a gentleman."

"Well, Doctor," murmured the enchantress, coyly withdrawing the hand, then suffering it to remain within his clasp, "well, Doctor, I will not insist upon an answer more explicit; but I must first try if I can trust you with a secret,—and then I shall make up my mind about revealing it. So be good. What name goes your valet under?"

Something like an oath escaped the Rector's half opened

lips. At length he answered: "Madam, I have come a long journey. I need not say my purpose is to look up the niece of a former dependent of my family. Perhaps you can inform me where she is to be found?"

"Yes," cooed Delilah, "always the story with you middle-aged gentlemen. It is always a niece for whom they have a most fatherly regard. But, come, do you want your own niece or the gipsy's niece? I will not further affect pleasantry. She is in my custody, and she is not. She was under my roof until recently, and is now safely removed to a distance, under the care of a faithful servant." The artful woman held the winning cards.

Rector, caressingly: "I thank you, Madame, for this frankness. Evil-minded persons have trumped up a story that my deceased cousin, Miss Devereux, still lives in the person of this foundling, Charity Green.

Lucretia, jestingly: "Have evil-minded persons trumped up this story, Doctor; that one Col. Tofton, alias the Rector's man, having succeeded in abducting this child from her protectors, conceived the shrewd design of marrying her himself, and, through her, of claiming the estate of the Earl of Riverside; took one Madame Lorne into his confidence, and placed the young lady under her matronly charge till such a time as the ceremony might be legally consummated?"

Rector, taking a high name in vain, "Madame, you astonish me. Be more explicit."

Lady. "Come, my friend, let go my hand; they called it pretty once; it was not made to be held in a vice. You hurt me, sir.—There. Do you really wish me, Sir Lion, to nibble at the meshes of this net they have drawn around you? The valet played for a high stake; but woman's wit was too much for him. Let me see. There were three gentlemen, alias burglars, who entrapped Miss, and were to share equally in the profits of the enterprise. It was

first settled that lots were to be drawn or dice thrown for the young lady's hand. Finally they agreed on Colonel Tofton as the happy man. Sir, I was deceived, grossly deceived, and supposed for a time that one of the parties was her lawful guardian, she being under age. I thwarted the villains."

The Rector's face grew ghastly. The artful one saw it, and resumed: "Tofton is in my power;" and here the white teeth glistened as she forced a laugh—"Ha! ha! But, come; be calm, while I tell you what may happen. You may marry her yourself; return with her, and, as husband, gloriously avenge yourself on the quidnuncs who have kept you out of the estate. This is one road,—not pleasant, as I see, though the pill is a gilded one.

"Or, Doctor, she may die!" Now the voice sank down to a fiend's whisper. The harlot was sounding the depths of guilt in that heart; nor did she fail to observe an inward gleam as the word "die" smote the ear."

They take Tunnies in the Mediterranean in a singular way. The fish are driven first into large chambers, opening with valves inwardly. Finding themselves entrapped, they rush into others, growing smaller, from which there is no escape but by an onward movement, till, finally, the last opens to where the fishermen, with keen knives, stand ready for their slaughter. Just so sure as a man embarks upon a course of crime, like the Tunny, he finds himself within a labyrinth of cells, from which, save through entire reformation, there is no escape. The course of crime is onward to its fearful end. Bushwig was the Tunny.

Madame Lorne waited for the words to take effect, and at last resumed, "Gold cannot buy that girl's life. It is barely possible, of course, that her days may be short, but I see no reason to expect it. She stands between you and a great fortune, unless you are confident that her pretensions can be disproved. Wait quietly in Charleston for

a few weeks, and I pledge you my honor that she will be with us."

Madame Lorne had miscalculated. The Rector answered bitterly, "My own servant has betrayed me. What warrant have I for resting quietly in the vain hope of encountering the young lady at some future time. You may be, for all I know, at this moment, plotting my destruction."

The lady rose indignant, "Sir, our conference is at an end. I am true to those who trust me."

The Rector had piqued the fair colloquist, not without a purpose, and, as she ceased, responded "Madame, you shall help me out as you will, and name your own reward."

Caught by the sudden change of mood, quick as thought grasping the extended hand, the wanton answered, "Done. I will help you. Now, hear my plan. Take my advice." Her heart was wavering from its fixed purpose. Might not she succeed in obtaining once more control over the heiress, convey her to a French convent, baffle the search that might be made, and then unite the young girl to her own son, a gay young man, now in Paris? It was a bold scheme, if not a safe one. She looked at the Doctor, a rosy English gentleman of good blood and high breeding. Why not marry him herself, and, at one step, assume abroad that dignified social position which she felt herself so calculated to fill. "None would know," Wantonness reasoned "that the Parisian wife of an eminent Anglican Divine had ever been otherwise than immaculate."

What were the Doctor's inward meditations meanwhile? He thought, "Let her bring the girl here:" and then the demon whispered through the dark chambers of his breast, "a few weeks will decide the matter. It is but a drop or two of some quieting fluid. I can administer the drop myself."

How still it was that night! The clouds dropped drowsily out of sight, and the white sea-fog seemed to dream as it

slowly ascended to the places of the stars. The sleepy patrols mechanically paced the streets, heedless that a storm was gathering, and breathing its first tokens upon the humid and heavy air. St. Michael's bell tolled one. The lady smiled, and blushed, and smiled,—then took her seat upon the Rector's knee, and pressed a wanton's kiss upon his lips. Then the angel who records our human deeds, with pen of fire, inscribed, upon a double scroll, "It is finished!"

Hush! How still they sleep! The dim night lamp burns with a diminished flame. The soft, luxurious carpet gives back no sound as stealthy feet move lightly over it. The matted hair, the unshorn visage, the wild eyes, slowly protruding through the doorway that opens from the upper rooms, disturb them not. The watch has stopped. The perfumed hangings droop in heavy folds as if they slumbered also. A solitary rose tree that faintly scents the apartment scatters its languid leaves. "Ah!" mutters the felon, lifting from the costly liqueur stand a crystal flagon and draining it deep, "Ah! here she is."

During three mortal hours he had watched and waited, hearing a muffled sound of voices and fearing to find himself confronted by men with arms. All, for the last half hour, had been still as death, and now, with the burglar's silent skill, the key turned. Tofton knew into whose dormitory he was to enter.

"Now I have her." A start, an oath, and the cry had half escaped the lips before he remembered the need of caution, "Dr. Bushwig." The ruffian's blood was up, the heady liquor giving him for the time a giant's strength. He feared to lose a moment lest the sleepers might awake. His eye glanced upon a jeweled poniard. He smiled to feel its edge,—its point. The long, nervous arm, steady as an engine's walking-beam, moved until the sleeper might have felt the shadow which it cast upon the face, and then,

through dainty flesh, as with a gleam of sudden lightning, it buried the weapon in the heart. She groaned heavily; the feet and hands quivered; the hot blood gurgled from the bosom. It was over.

In pleasant mood, with jest and repartee, as empty goblets and the remains of food near by might plainly speak, the two had supped. The Rector lay stupefied with wine. The soul of the burglar revolted. "No, he would not take another life. No, he would not; one was enough. He would fly." He sought the outer door. Vain attempt! The implement here failed. Escape he must; but how? Could he only find the keys? They must be on Madame's person. Could he avail himself of the garments of the master he might pass unquestioned. Once in the street, the wretch thought "I am safe."

It was but an instant and the keen blade smote home again. A hollow groan! The severed ventricle spouted to the ceiling. For a moment the dying man's eyes opened wildly and threw a look of subtle and all-abhorrent recognition at the murderer's face; then, slowly settling down, like some great steamer, when, with all her living crew she dives headlong beneath the waves, the Rector of Richmantown slept his last sleep.

Do dogs scent death? The fierce and surly tenant of the kennel, fed so long by those white hands that worms must make their meal on now, with mighty leaps was tearing at his chain. And now a monotonous howl arises, wild, wailing and terrible.

The burglar robed himself in haste, drew the dead man's hat over his eyes, wrapped the dead man's heavy cloak about his person, and strode rapidly down the stairs. Evidently the house was aroused, for now the watch-dog began to tear at the chain again, while that howl had given place to a deep, unearthly baying, as if the beast scented blood. The murderer's hand was on the latch-key, the door opened

as he tipped the dull negress who guarded it with a golden fee. Staggering heavily over the threshold he was grasped in the arms of Handy Ben and Cunning Joe.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE WEDDING AT THE VAN TWIGGLES.

Winter had set in again with redoubled severity. The broad Hudson was a mass of solid ice. The cattle cowered in their stalls to feel the keen north wind as it whistled around the gables. Out-door sports were at an end. The thermometer stood far below zero. It was the coldest day for years.

It is eleven o'clock in the morning. Sleigh bells jingle with merry music as load after load of Van Waggeners and Roosevelts and twenty good old Netherlandish names besides, shawled and cloaked and muffed and tippeted and hooded and packed away in furs, with shouts of healthy laughter and stampings of feet and brushings of icicles from chin and eyebrow, are deposited upon the broad stoop, and hurried, with hospitable haste to stand and thaw before great stoves.

Sambo and his Dinah were there as might have been inferred by guffaws of merriment from the rear building.— Three generations of the Van Twiggles had been served by three generations of native Abyssinians, who, adopting the patronimic of their master's family had increased and multiplied and sent out thriving offshoots to the remote regions of Saugerties and Dirrup. Rattle, rattle, shook the bones. The Columbian Minstrels had turned out in full force, and now, with preliminary scraping of fiddles and tuning of the banjo, to the infinite delight of a half score of ebony urchins of all sizes, were about to marshal themselves into the keeping room.

Our friend Miles, being master of ceremonies, had sent up a sleigh load of music in honor of Miss Katrina's wedding. The sable melodists took their places upon a temporary platform, and commenced their matinee with

THE DARKIE'S WEDDING.

"Sambo, nay, thou must not take her,"
Massa said,—he was a Quaker,
When I asked if I might marry
Pompey's daughter, smiling Harrie.
Then he cried, "Thou must not do it,
If thou dost, thy hide will rue it."

CHORUS.— Verily and notwithstanding,
I will go to Coeyman's Landing.

To the Parson I will take her.
Ho, boys, ho! We'll cheat the Quaker.
While the broad-brims are at meeting
We our vows will be repeating.
Let the cups and saucers rattle;
Two can kiss and never prattle.
CHORUS.— Verily and notwithstanding,
Ho, boys, ho! for Coeyman's Landing.

While the table cloth's a-spreading
Celebrate the darkie's wedding.
Parson said, "Boy, wilt thou take her?"
Yea, I cried, to spite the Quaker.
"Hold him tight then handsome Harrie."
That's the way the darkies marry.

CHORUS.— Verily and notwithstanding,
Kiss the bride at Coeyman's Landing.

Is there an ebony Cupid who rules in mythic realms high
above the sources of the Nile, or where the gold sands
glitter beyond Timbuctoo? He it must have been who
invented the double shuffle and taught the first dark lover

to thumb the banjo and rattle the bones. This mirthful spirit had to-day taken especial possession of his sable myrmidons.

Sambo gracefully bowed at the close of this instructive and melodious ditty, and said, "Brudder Bones, I hab de honor to propound a corumblebum. What fish dat swims in 'Sopus creek am like Miss Katrina's eyes?"

BONES, "Gib em up, Sambo; gib em up."

SAMBO, "Mass' Hans Bronk, him know. They be shiners. He's bin tryin to hook em dese tree years. Dat puts me in mind about our 'sperience wid de bull Bull-frogs and dinner pots. Strike up, darkies."

Then the Minstrels brought down the house with

THE GHOST OF ESOPUS CREEK.

We paddled down Esopus Creek :
Our old canoe wid fun did leak ;
De creek was wet ; our lips were dry ;
We made no wry face at the rye.
We fished for perch and silver eel ;—
Oh ! darkies, hear de bull-frogs squeal.

First Cudjoe caught a turtle old,
Joe took a perch and Pete a cold ;
Then Cudjoe cried, "A whale I've got ;"
His line had hooked a dinner-pot.
De moon was setting in de sky ;—
Oh ! darkies, hear de bull-frogs cry.

Bones took de cover off de pot,
Den dropt de kettle like a shot ;
Out ob it came a something white,
And Cornstalk fainted at de sight.
De stars went in, dar lights went out ;—
Oh ! darkies, hear de bull-frogs shout.

Den Brudder Bones, he cried aloud,
"What means dis kettle's smoking cloud !"

De cloud replied, as it was bid
"I am de ghost ob Robert Kidd!
De thunder loud began to peal;—
Oh! darkies, hear de bull-frogs squeal.

Den Sambo shook, de ghost to see.
De pirate cried, "Now I am free.
Within this kettle I was bound,
A year for ebry man I drowned."
Our hearts grew like a pavin' stone:—
Oh! darkies, hear de bull-frogs groan.

We poled our dug-out to de edge,
And dare we took de temp'rance pledge.
De ghost had tried us all to drown.
We told de folks at Tarrytown:
Dey said he came of too much rye:—
Oh! darkies, hear de bull-frogs cry.

Then Brother Bones, seeing that the laugh was against him, tilted with Sambo thus wise, "In your perfeshun of a barber you hab trabbled. Hab eber you wisited de regions ob de great West?"

SAMBO, "I hab de honor ob trabbeling in a steamboat, Bones, all de way from Sinsernatty to Natchez under de hill and back agin."

BROTHER BONES, "Den I hab circumwented a corumble-bum for you to imprehend, and Mas' Wallingford hab put it into potry for de occashun.

"What town hab you seen like a three-cornered skillet,
Wid roaches, musquitos and agues to fill it,
Half under mortgage and all under water,
And named from the birth-place of Pharaoh's daughter?"

SAMBO, "Dat am as plain, Bones, as de two spectable young Dutchmen, on dare marrow bones, dat was seen on de elebenteenth ob December, in de optics of Miss 'Trinie Van Twiggle, one in each eye, as de gemplin popped de

question. I hab been dare, Bones, and dined at de grand hotel, wid half a roasted galliniper and a slice ob yam on my plate, two yaller darkies waiting behind me, and a white clerk when I be half done saying, 'One dollar for your dinner, Sir.' Dat town be named Cairo."

"Talking about ghosts," said Cudjoe, "makes me cry." Mercurial race, these humble sons of nature pass at quickest pace from life's shadows to its lights. Their pathos and their fun spring both from fountains that bubble out of the same heart. So Cudjoe, to a plaintive air, quavered out his solo,

THE ROSE OF DIRRUP.

I'd ride a goose a thousand miles,
Without a yoke or stirrup,
Once more to meet thy sugar'd smiles,
Oh! lubly Rose of Dirrup.

The colored pussons tip their hats,
The wrens and robins chirrup,
The river floods the Mohawk flats
To meet the Rose of Dirrup.

Her breath it was the dew of June,
Her kiss was maple syrup,
Her eyes just like a double moon,—
The lubly Rose of Dirrup.

Oh! darkies, lay the banjo by,
No more my feelings stir up:—
She walks beyond the shining sky,—
My lubly Rose of Dirrup.

The robins call above her grave;
At eve the thrushes chirrup;
The Mohawk tells his weeping wave
To mourn the Rose of Dirrup.

I'd wander o'er the wide, wide earth,
And hold the rich man's stirrup,
Once more, beside the chimney hearth,
To court the Rose of Dirrup.

This did not bring the house down but called out first
the smiles and afterward the sudden tears.

Then Pete, a fine mulatto, the dandy of the group and
a famous violin player, with a rich tenor of his own, broke
in with

MY NELLY.

The white man's daughter Mary
Is fair as fair can be ;
Her robes are soft and airy ;
Her thoughts a Christmas tree.
There all the birds are winging
That fly through skies above,
And bridal rapture singing,—
But I've a sweeter love.

Her dark hair waves in ringlets,
Her heart keeps time below ;
I almost see the winglets
Upon her shoulders grow.
The planter's daughter glances
And smiles within her glass.
But ah ! the brooklet dances
To see my Nelly pass.

The planter's daughter Mary
Has gone beyond the sea ;
But I've a bosom fairy
Who warms my heart for me.
All day my eyes behold her,—
She is the daylight's pride ;
At night my arms enfold her,
My smiling, Southern bride.

If Ebony Cupid composed that he surely did it with

English Cupid tickling his heart, and Gretchens and Annies looked roguishly at rustic lovers, eyeing them as a young darkie of three years gazes on soft waffles, hot, with butter, sugar and a sprinkling of nutmeg over them. But sentiment gave way to fun at the expense of next door neighbors, Down East, while the company, with a grand march, dashed into

THE FIRST BROTHER JONATHAN.

Grandfather Ham from the ark went down:—

Hoe, boys, hoe! hoe, boys, hoe!

And what do you think on the earth he foun'?

Plant all the sugar cane stalks in a row.

He picked up a nutmeg made of wood.—

Hoe, boys, hoe! hoe, boys, hoe!

He cracked it to see if the meat was good.

Plant all the sugar cane stalks in a row

Out of the nut came a sharp-faced man:

Hoe, boys, hoe! hoe, boys, hoe!

He was the first Brother Jonathan.

Plant all the sugar cane stalks in a row.

Out of his pocket he drew a jack-knife;

Hoe, boys, hoe! hoe, boys, hoe!

And whittled while Ham ran away for his life.

Plant all the sugar cane stalks in a row.

Pete's forte was sentiment decidedly. At a call of the house he wiped his eyes and sang

OLD CUFFY.

Old Cuffy gathers moss

Where cypress branches wave;

At night he weeps beside the cross

That marks his daughter's grave.

His master set him free,
He is no more a slave,
But moulders, like the cypress tree,
Above his daughter's grave.

He sits by day forlorn,
And hears the wild winds rave :
Come, darkies, hoe the sprouting corn,—
He weeps beside her grave.

Once Cuffy's child was here ;—
Perhaps her tresses wave
In that bright star, at evening clear,
That shines above her grave.

Old Cuffy's tear-drops fall
By Amite's crystal wave.
He hears his daughter's spirit call
Above her forest grave.

More sleigh bells, more stamping upon the stoop. The sharp gusts rattle at the glass but can't come in.

Brother Bones had meanwhile retired and now reëntered in the attire of a Cape Cod fishing darkey, an ebony New Englander. His full voice rang out in the great and celebrated song,

THE GIRLS OF TARRYTOWN.

I smacks my lips to think that I
Was broughten up on pumpkin pie,
My master's name is Deacon Jones ;
De white folks call me 'Brudder Bones.'
From Marblehead I'm coming down
To court de girls ob Tarrytown.

I've read, in all de spelling books,
Ob roellitches and oleykooks ;

And how de Hudson colored girls
 Are ebon diamonds and pearls.
 Oh! maple sugar sweet goes down ;—
 So do de girls ob Tarrytown.

Once Mother Eve three children had,
 Besides the one who turned out bad.
 De first at sunrise he was born,
 De red man woke at rosy morn.
 Oh! colored persons, don't you frown
 Among de girls ob Tarrytown.

De white man in his cradle lay
 When snowy clouds obscured de day.
 De darkie came to earth at night,
 So colored folks like stars am bright.
 Wait, Brudder Bones am coming down,
 To see de girls ob Tarrytown.

Since he has left old Deacon Jones
 He hasn't found a 'Sister Bones.'
 Bring out de brownest oleykooks,
 And gals, put on your sweetest looks :
 For Brudder Bones is comin down
 To court de girls ob Tarrytown.

We have seen a vein of sentiment, deep hidden, in Miles' generous nature. He might have been a poet had not the more solid granite overlaid that golden vein. The lyric that followed was the happiest inspiration of his muse, and called The Dying Darkie. Set to a sweet, old English melody and sung with a low and tender accompaniment it called forth the fluent crystals from many a bright eye. Perhaps too it threw a rosy gleam from the better country on the festivities of Katrina's wedding day.

THE DYING DARKIE.

His grave is in the rice swamp's mold ;
 His hair was white, his bones were old.

He called the planter to his bed ;
" Massa," he spake, " I am gwyng dead ;
Say to the field-hands, when I'm gone,
' The Christmas days are coming on.' "

He whispered low, then, pointing far,
He sang, " I see a yellow star.
There clearer Nigers roll their tide ;
I rise to thee, my dark-haired bride !
She died of age, and grief and care ;
But smiles in youth forever there."

Oh ! darkies, put your sorrows by ;—
I saw the light in Cudjoe's eye.
The master wept to see him go ;
The early morn was all a-glow ;
We knelt ; the sun began to rise ;
With it he rose to Paradise.

Oh ! brothers, through the cold, cold, ground
The path that Cudjoe took is found.
There hearts that love shall ne'er grow old ;
Our banjoes turn to harps of gold.
Sing to the field-hands when we're gone,
" The Christmas days are coming on."

But now was heard driving up Dominie Van Courtland's
yellow sleigh. Miles gave the signal for the finale. Merrily
struck up the banjo, and, with an old tune that set even the
frosty blood of age in motion, the troupe joined in

THE WEDDING FROLIO.

De planter puffs his brown segar ;
De darkie smokes his pipe ;
For both comes out the sunset star,
For both the cane grows ripe.
Forward, backward, heel and toe ;
Both to a wedding like to go.

De planter sells his sugar crops;
De darkie sells his eggs;
One waltzes wile de oder hops
And for a partner begs.
Forward, backward, heel and toe;
Both to a wedding like to go.

De planter pops de question too,
As Pompey does, at night,
Just as all pigeons love to coo,
Though blue or brown or white.
Forward, backward, heel and toe;
Both to a wedding like to go.

The whole house was now a scene worthy of a better pen. White-haired grandfathers and grandmothers, with smiling faces, old folks in snug corners, were recounting the merry courting scenes of fifty years ago; and over them, from out his mellow horn, Dutch Cupid, forever young, as he remembered how the candles nodded, and the hickory sparkled, and the brown crullers disappeared in those good days, sprinkled a fresh libation, that turned to cheery radiance, and danced like a spring shower as it fell.

As the old Dominie made his appearance, spectacles on nose, and cane in hand, perhaps the venerable divine remembered too, how, scores of years before, these aged ones stood up, smiling in holiday attire and bride-favors, when the grand century was in its prime. Where are the years? A new generation smiles around him; but, ever young and ever beautiful, he sees that human nature does not fail; that Love, the imperishable, crowns the bride of to-day with as rich a garland, and tints the virgin's lip and cheek with roses bright as those that met the sight when first, with trembling lips, himself in youthful promise, and with a young man's hopes, he stood in God's name to link together the bridegroom and the bride.

Talk about age being hard and crusty! True age is

ripe and genial. Though we stand and see our grandchildren pledge heart-plight before the holy man, our youthful souls belie the wrinkles of three score years and ten.

Love,—true love, is not a March torrent that frets and wastes itself till summer dust fills up the bed. It springs from a deep fountain, gentle and all unseen. The blossoms that grow around its birth-place vanish like the Wind Flower and the Spring Beauty, but still it flows, meandering through the plains that stretch their vast perspective from the rising to the setting sun. It deepens and widens till at last the runnel that a child's hand might span becomes the boundary of empires. The oak and the plane tree, that grow and flourish by its side, and drink full draughts through mighty roots, from all its waters, slowly vanish like the year's first painted darlings, but the mighty river broadens and deepens still. Then, when it loses itself in that vast, silent ocean, whither it has flowed from the beginning, then, even, its majestic movement is but begun. Hope sees it rising into a vast atmosphere of rainbows. Faith, that looks through darkening sunset, beholds the golden clouds, that bear its risen waters on, still on, to drop in springtide showers, to melt into the opening blossoms of a fairer land.

But while all were ready for the wedding the bridesmaid disappeared. Zulette, the quadron, was the first to miss her. Not a soul had seen the maiden go. At eleven her hands had gaily woven a flower wreath for Katrina's hair; then, retiring to her own apartment, she had been noticed a short half-hour later tripping merrily, singing on the way, toward the spare parlor where the nuptial ceremonies were to be performed. Charity was not there. The day was bitter cold. A white glove lay on the parlor floor, too small for any other lady's hand.

The guests had all assembled; none were missing. Belinda the aged cook, alone had heard, or fancied that she

heard, something like a cry. When eagerly interrogated the negress could only add that it appeared to come from the North side of the house and might have been the wind. For the first time it was now remarked that a disused door, opening from the spare parlor to a Summer porch and always closed during the Winter months, though now locked, had recently been opened. Outside they found a second glove, and, printed on the ice-glaze where water had frozen, the marks made by a heavy boot-heel. This was all. It was but a few steps, over ground blown bare by the Northeast storm to an angle in the road. The quadroom was frantic, tearing her hair, wringing her hands and muttering unintelligible sounds.

One alone of the guests remained self-possessed, and he restored quiet by a few quick words when convinced that an abduction had really taken place. This was Wallingford. Master of himself he mastered the occasion, almost forcing the crowd, now bent on searching the neighborhood, to remain within doors. The young man bade black Sambo harness at once the pair of swift horses in which Hans Bronk expected soon to bear away in triumph the bride. Then, saying that it was ill luck to break old customs, the bride and groom consented to stand up while the ceremony was performed.

His pointer dog, by chance—if there be any chance—had cowered in the buffaloes of the sleigh, and, coiled up at his master's feet, paid the farm-house a visit. Hastily arming himself with such weapons as were at hand, donning a greatcoat and heaping the sleigh with warm garments, Miles sallied from the door, holding in his hand the dress which the young girl had worn that morning. Dash, the pointer, at his heels, Sambo holding the horses' heads, high mettle and impatient for a start.

If the youth was mad there was method in it. In five minutes the dog began to point. The subtle instinct which

this noble animal possesses above all others, told him that the owner of the dress had been carried from the door of the North parlor, down the steps of the piazza, behind a screen of lilacs to the road's turn. The road lay straight and open ten miles to the river.

Miles thought, "She has been gone forty minutes. They have then at least five miles the start. We shall find them at the railway station," musing thus on the way, for now the Van Twiggie homestead was far behind. Ten minutes and a sight cheered him; here a slight vehicle with covered top had been turned over, the marks indicated within the last half-hour. He saw the broad track of the runners. A mile farther, and, reaching the summit of the hill, a short four miles beyond, flying through the intervale, the pursuer caught one glance of a covered sleigh drawn by grey horses.

The engineer of the express train stopped a moment to exchange the time at the station below, and, as the whistle of the locomotive, ringing sharp and far, announced their proximity to the station immediately above, discovering that he was a moment late, the vexed conductor ran the train upon the switch. It must lie over ten minutes by the rules of the road.

In that covered sleigh, stupefied by chloroform and wrapped in a heavy traveling overall, supported between two gentlemanly appearing men, who, with looks of anxious concern, imitated the husband and the brother, conveying a tenderly beloved relative on a journey and grieving to see that its fatigues were proving too much for her delicate frame, Miles, with quick eye, divined the object of his search.

It was too late. The train, that stops but a moment at the smaller stations, thundered up. He saw the lady lifted out with tender care, her protectors accompanying her into the car.

Too late? A brave man never says "too late." Though perhaps a quarter of a mile distant from the depot, he might still, by dashing the steeds across the white fields, urge them upon the track. The depot being South, the train, moving Northward, was still below.

With lightning force the sleigh plunges down the hill-side. The locomotive, at a quarter speed, is just below.—The brakes are applied, but, in a moment, as the driver springs from the seat, the engine dashes the sleigh into ten thousand fragments. One mettled horse, the bay, gives a leap, clears the traces and is gone. His companion, a moment since so eager to devour the way, with eye so bright, with limbs so sinewy and swift of foot,—he lies crushed. It is all so sudden, that, as the cars come to a dead stand, the good steed is dead as well.

But, though the steed is dead, the driver, contused and shaken, recovers himself. The body is made to serve the spirit, and the senses have no right to complain that they suffer, while the soul has need of them.

As the traveler rises, the conductor, who knows the editor right well, grasps him by the hand, with, "Miles, my dear fellow, what are you driving at? Your horse is killed and you within an ace of it."

"All right," replies Wallingford. "Push on to the next station; you are behind time," and so the cars move.

This has taken place so rapidly that our gentlemanly men who have so carefully wrapt up their exhausted relative, have barely time to spring simultaneously from their seats, divining with rapid instinct that they are baffled, and, leaping from the platform, to dash into the thicket.

Once inside the cars our hero makes no words until at the side of his lovely but unconscious mistress. He has found her! found her!

At five P. M. limping and moaning piteously, his poor flesh scalded by the steam, the pointer found his way into

the kitchen of the Van Twiggles. At seven P. M. without its mate, with no trace of harness but collar and head stall, Bay Derrick, Hans Bronk's swift horse, whinnied at the gate. At half past nine drove up a covered sleigh, and with a cheery "Here we are," brave Miles leaped forth with the maiden, still half insensible, clasped in his arms.

The little village at which Wallingford had left the railway with his still unconscious charge boasted but one humble house for the accommodation of wayfarers. Snugly ensconced within its quiet parlor he soon had the satisfaction of witnessing the deathlike stupor pass away. With wondering eyes the dear girl beheld the unfamiliar objects, at first with maidenly alarm; slowly recovering from that deep swoon and shuddering at the fear that she might still be encircled by those hateful arms.

The snow that now began to fall, filling all the air with fleecy particles, cast the room into a shadow which the fitful gleams of the fire light relieved alone. The short lived February afternoon was swiftly passing. Recovering to her full senses while the merry sound of bells rang without the maiden started to find no enemy, no stranger, but one whom her young heart called "brother," mutely gazing. It was enough, the quick heart divined in an instant that the rescuer stood before her.

But where was she? The heart beat quick. The languid blood began to stir within the veins with brisker motion. Old memories strangely mingled themselves with fresher recollections. A pleasant sense of rest and quiet, of genial warmth and security took the place of fright and fear. The eyes closed again; the effects of the chloroform had not yet entirely left the system; the features settled into repose.

Gaze on, young lover, gaze on, and look thy heart away. Gaze on the lips that part their crimsoned outline, while the soft breath comes and goes; and the gentle bosom that

harbors nought but purity and peace rounds out its viewless billows; and the tear that has stolen through the drooping eyelashes melts away on the transparent cheek, and shines like a diamond in sudden fire-light, and disappears. Gaze on; think, while the momentary care-lines on the young face are one by one removed, as if some glorious angel were calling back the spirit of that lovely tabernacle to its primal and divine repose;—think of thy own mother, herself a dweller with the bright ones; think of all things pure and noble; and, when thy heart is thus made clear from all its earth-born taint, stand still and listen.

Stand still and listen; for, behold! the eyes open and the lips move; the face lights up effulgent, and a low voice, which wakes whole troops of echoes in thy heart's halls, sprinkles its airy drops upon the soul's deep hidden pictures, like water on some faded fresco of the ancient time, and calls out, I know not what,—perhaps the first remembrances of a divine childhood, before the inmost essence was swathed with that body which Michael Angelo so truly calls “this frail, weary weed.”

First, step forth and tell the kind, old-fashioned hostess that your fair charge is sleeping, that thus her slumbers may be undisturbed, and then return. To few in this world are such clear intimations given of incommunicable mysteries, that rest, all folded up, in the soul's life of lives.

Thou hast read in books of curious experiments that prying men have made, seeking to search out our human holy of holies,—of hidden senses that sleep within these veils of matter, like sunbeams within a prism. Thou hast heard that drowning men remember, as the soul half loses her hold on earthly things, the long succession of events, vivid as the morning, from infancy's first dawn; how redeemed ones departing from this earth, while yet within the body's gates, have felt the golden hinges turning, and so looked forth and caught a glimpse of paradise.

But come now and see that living wonder; come now and behold the eyes burning with preternatural lustre.— Draw near with more than a brother's reverence and take that gentle hand in thine.

Miles took Charity's hand. Curious words, dropped by the quadroon, had made him aware that she was probably subject to somnambulism. The young man was not unprepared therefore,—not wholly unprepared,—for that which might come after. He ventured to address the sleeper, "Do you know me, my friend?"

A little thrill, a tender, downcast look, and then a voice, "I do know you. Take my handkerchief and bind it round your temples. There is a contusion on the left side. You must not take cold in it. You have bruised your arm, and that hurts also, and the cords of the ankle are strained. How did it happen? Oh! I see. You sprung from the sleigh just before the locomotive struck it. Call me Rosa when you question me."

Miles had an obscure sensation that he was slightly injured by the fall, and, binding up the forehead, returned to his seat again.

"There, Rosa, I have complied with your request. How did they take you?"

"I must look." A pause, then the reply, "They came in a covered sleigh, which they obtained at the depot. They took off the bells and drove into the lane, turned and were out of sight. Finding that there was a wedding in the house and the north wing deserted, they crossed the garden and opened the doorway upon the summer piazza. I stood in the centre of the room and, as the door opened, supposed that some of the guests were coming in that way. Before I could turn my head a handkerchief saturated with chloroform was put over my mouth. In an instant I was lifted from my feet. As I was carried down the steps of the piazza I succeeded, the handkerchief having slipped,

in giving one cry. In a moment or two afterward, I was in the lane and lifted into the vehicle. Here I became unconscious. They drew over my head a tight hood and muffled me in a dark camlet cloak. This was done while one of them was driving. We were overturned once on the way. I was then unconscious. The rest you know."

"But, Rosa, who were these men?"

Another pause. "I will try to see who they were. I cannot fully understand." (Shuddering.) "They are murderers or the friends of murderers. They came from New York. Now wait, I must go a long way. One of them followed us from Charleston. He managed to find access to an officer of the law whom Madame Lorne sent northward in search of Zulette, her slave. Representing that he had an old friend familiar with this situation, he introduced a confederate to the officer. When they had discovered that a quadroon woman was at Wiltsevleet one of them came as a foot pedlar to the house and asked for entertainment, about dusk in the evening. This was on Monday. Early the next morning, having identified Zulette as the runaway and myself as Charity Green, he met his accomplice and they planned the abduction."

"Why do they pursue you, Rosa?"

"Rosa must not tell now." A deep blush suffused her face. He forebore to press the question and only asked, "Can you see a thought that passes through my mind?"

Soft and low came the answer, "Yes, you are right in your supposition." The silent inquiry Miles made was this, "Are you pursued because a party is determined to make you his wife?" The thought that Rosa might be an heiress did not occur to him, lover-like imagining that his treasure shone radiant to other eyes beside his own.

The inquirer continued, "But once more, Rosa, you have looked at others in this strange search, now look at me."

Why did he ask that question? Was he willing to have heart read, life unravelled?

Again that deep, thrilling voice answered, "When I first met you in the printing office at Tarrytown, your mind had just been fixed in a high and great purpose. It was to live and labor for the elevation of those who are unable to lift themselves. You had silently promised, in the presence of your Maker, to give all your powers to Him, as a meek and willing servant of His will. This had cost a severe inward struggle, but you conquered."

"What else, Rosa?" "Rosa will tell you all that she is permitted. You must walk by faith, and trust implicitly in the Providence that is leading you. At every crisis in your career will come a severe mental conflict. God leaves you to be tempted that you may act in freedom. Through temptation, resisted and vanquished, He fits you, day by day, to accomplish more arduous duties."

"You ask me now, in your mind, such a question as I could not answer in any other condition than this. I will look and see."

Miles had now fallen upon his knees, still holding that delicate hand.

"You ask me, Miles,—but I must not answer that question without a promise from you first,—you ask me if my heart can ever be yours. Before I reply to this inquiry you must promise that you will journey with me a long distance to my mother. She is,—but no,—I will not tell you who she is now. As soon as I cross the sea the mental state which you now behold will come to an end. I shall cease to be a somnambulist. I was stolen from my mother when a child. She will recognize me by the evidences of birth marks, but has other means. On the day that I am eighteen years of age, and not till then, will my separated consciousness become whole again. But one more great peril awaits me. Safe in your protection, if I pass this, and do all my duty,

the veil which hides my future shows a transparent light which indicates a double happiness."

Again the fair speaker continued, "Do not make this promise, Miles, except in freedom." She drew off her slender finger a plain golden ring, while speaking.

Solemnly and slowly came the answer, "Dear Rosa, be my fate in the future what God ordains. I ask no other. As a dear and honored sister, I will conduct you to your mother, and leave all events in His hands. I will promise all else besides that you have exacted of me."

Rosa turned to him, and, with a voice that trembled with emotion, responded, "Two souls in one, man and woman first come from the Creative Spirit. They flutter as sportive infants in heavenly atmospheres, then take their places in earthly germs. None but the good are ever permitted to know and recognise each other. When they have become this earth's inhabitants, through labors, painful and often long continued, and undertaken from Divine impulses, and for Heavenly ends, the fibres of the internal and primal life, seeking their counterparts, grow out through the body, and the mates are drawn together. This is the first and best marriage. When God draws persons otherwise into earthly wedlock, that, too, is good, but not like this. When two thus united become one there is at last complete transfusion: they serve God with one will on earth, with one will afterward in Heaven. Take this ring, Miles; wear it in your breast; it is my answer."

"You have much more to say to me. I can answer your questions though unspoken. First you inquire if I shall recollect this in my ordinary waking state? I shall not, the consciousness is so divided and such clouds roll between. But when my eighteenth birthday has arrived, provided meanwhile the Divine Providence leads me to my relatives, the two halves of the consciousness will become one. I shall be restored perfectly to natural health. If, during all

this time, we both do our Heavenly Father's will, we shall meet in freedom. Take, then, this ring which I have now given you, and, wherever I am and by whatever name I may be called, I shall recognize it as my own and with it recall and accept in the outer part of my consciousness that which I now in freedom consent to in its inner or heavenly part. Till then, dear Miles, I shall not recollect, for the union will not have been made perfect. It is the soul of the girl, dear Miles, that now reads in your soul its mate, meekly accepting him.

"You ask me again, my treasure, in your thought, How you are to guide me through perils which I foresee? First I will tell you where I am to go to. There hangs in your own house, dear Miles, an old, faded picture. It is on the East wall, surrounded with, as it seems, family relics. There is no other picture beside portraits in the room. That is the place I am to be taken to.

"You will discover, on removing the centre stone of the hearth in the same old room, a small oak cabinet. Your great-grandfather placed it there against some family emergency. The contents of this will be sufficient to defray all the expenses that may accrue and more. Zulette must accompany me as a nurse and servant. If I escape that peril of which I spoke, we shall leave for our destination in the month of May. Confide your purpose to none. When I shall awake this conversation will have entirely been covered with oblivion.

"I will tell you how to proceed with me. Take me first to my friends, who are anxiously awaiting your return. At seven in the morning, or about that hour, the officer of the law of whom I spoke will make his appearance with a posse of men, empowered to reclaim the woman who escaped with me from Charleston, as a fugitive. Do not let her go. Her free papers were executed and signed by her mistress, who had promised her manumission and had shown her the legal

documents, ready for delivery after a certain time. As I look for the house in Charleston where she lived I cannot find it. There is no danger. Legal authorities have her effects in charge. That paper is among them. The slave is free. She was not free twenty-four hours ago, but she is now. I cannot see how this is. It is hidden from me. You have simply to await a despatch from Charleston, when all this will be made clear. The officer of the law is a gentleman in feeling, and by birth a Southerner. Meet him frankly. Say to him that you are Zulette's adviser,—that you have no disposition to resist the process of the law, but that you have learned that her free-papers have been executed and are now on record. Request him to remain at your house with Zulette in charge till he shall have time to forward and receive an answer. Madame Lorne has left a will also, in which Zulette's freedom is provided for. She must be dead, but this was hidden from me. It seems that she would have revoked this, but had not time.

"I will now speak of the one danger which is still to be encountered. Wait ten minutes." Here the voice ceased; the breathing became inaudible; the pulse fluttered and was almost still. As the moments elapsed, as if with a painful effort the lips moved: "I have seen such a sight—such a sight! Oh! Miles, if you miss me take the Central Railroad as soon as possible. They mean to convey me to Canada by way of Niagara Falls.

Oh! the waters,—the great, rolling waters! The mists grow silver in the moonlight; the tender flowers begin to appear; the robin and the blue bird nestle in the coverts.

Oh! the waters,—the dreadful waters! They plunge over the slippery rocks and shudder as they gaze into the abyss before they disappear. The rocks shake. Huge ice-masses come drifting down the rapids, but shiver into fragments and crumble away as they wrestle and beat against each other and go down.

Oh! the waters,—the beautiful waters! Hark! the first singers of the season awake, for there is a balmy breath upon the morn, and the day star floats above the hilltops like a silver water-bird who dips his feathers in a ruby sea. I am there Miles, I am there. Should you save me the last, great danger is over. We shall go home."

Once more the sweet girl spoke, and now more plaintive, more tender was her voice. It was as if some lonely night-ingle, transported from Oriental gardens to a frozen, hyperborean realm, were singing to itself its own glad recollections of the tuberose and the fragrant lily and all the thousand flowers of its distant birthplace. "Oh!" she murmured, "Oh! soul of my soul! With rosy children, clothed in garments woven of the first smiles of the morning, we balance in the perfumed air,—we dance where parterres of ever-springing flowers keep motion to the music of our hearts. This,—this is the first beginning and the primal home. Yet here the joy of being is but a bliss of infancy; its language the sportive laughter of two half-formed essences wafted from blossom to blossom; a dream that melts and vanishes in its own delight. Oh! my beloved,—my soul's beloved! Through earth and all its toils and sufferings, through overcoming of all impure desires, all thoughts that have their origin and end in self alone, returning, in the completed cycle of our being, we kneel together, once again, upon these purple hillsides. We are called the sons and daughters of the morning. Oh! my beloved,—my soul's beloved!" Now the voice, as a rose that closes up its petals and sleeps overpowered by its own sweetness, languished and was still. The charmed slumber was over.

"Kiss me, dearie," said gallant Hans to his coy bride, the two looking out from the dormer window over the high stoop, and listening to the sound of coming bells.

"Not a kiss, Hans, not a kiss," pouted the laughing dam-

sel, escaping from his arms. "Never shall it be said that a Dutch bride did a thing against old customs. You kiss the bridesmaid; I kiss the groomsman; then the groomsman and the bridesmaid kiss each other; that's for luck and another wedding. Then, Hans," and the full lips pouted, "then you may kiss me."

Twinkle, twinkle, shone the merry stars, as if they, gazing out on this frosty night, beheld the buxom lass, and lovingly approved the silent feeling of that good heart, fluttering with anxiety for its absent friend, and holding aloof from the kind breast on which it longed to nestle, till reassured that the lost was found.

But English Cupid just then, in his dove-drawn car, entered through the window, and, patting jolly Dutch Cupid, on the back, he whispered, and the two, arm in arm, as brothers should, began lovingly to converse together.

English Cupid said, "There they come." Dutch Cupid answered "Yah, yah," and flew to disappointed Hans, and tickled him under the ribs, and dashed a cloud of sunshine on the honest face, and puffed into the nostrils a breath of invisible smoke from the fragrant pipe-bowl, and Hans sneezed, and thought that he was taking cold, and ran after Katrina.

CHAPTER XL.

RESURGEMUS.

The horses' heads were turned toward Wiltsevleet. In the sleigh sat, first, Ambrose Quackenbush the constable, on the seat with the driver; then two jolly fellows, hired as special deputies, and, in the place of honor, a man of the law, side by side with the dark complexioned stranger, shivering in cloak and buffalo as if unaccustomed to the winters of the north. This was at half-past six, A. M.

Our friend, Miles Wallingford, is up early this morning enjoying the frosty, bracing air. The posse are still a good mile from Wiltsevleet, having stopped at Brom Vanbruggen's, the horses to cool and the bipeds to warm. They have driven fast since daylight. Here Wallingford meets them, he, too, rubbing his hands before the huge Franklin in the bar-room. The editor is well known by all the party except the bilious looking traveler in the cloak. An introduction soon takes place, whereupon our Charleston friend invites the company to the bar.

Miles abominates brandy, but touches the glass to his lips with the rest and then invites the Carolinian to a conference at the window. Honorable men have an instinct by which they recognize each other. Educated to look upon the black as an inferior race, born to service, it did not trouble the conscience of this son of a decayed planter to search out a runaway slave, but he would have scorned a lie and knocked down the man, instantler, who approached him with a bribe. Wallingford read the character at a glance, and

quietly remarked, "I am at present, Sir, acting as the friend and adviser of the person whom you have taken legal measures to arrest. I am not here to interfere with you in the discharge of your legal duty, but on the other hand will facilitate the process."

The Southerner waxed mellow under Miles' beamy look, and answered with a careless oath, "The blazes you are. What do you propose to do?"

WALLINGFORD, "Well, Colonel,"—it is always safe to address a Southerner as Colonel. You may slightly overshoot, but it is not safe to go below Major, and it is possible that he may rejoice in the epithet of General,—so, Colonel being the average, Miles took it. "Well, Colonel, I might have saved you a trifle of expense had I seen you yesterday. Madame Lorne, my client's owner, has executed her free papers. You are aware, that, should this be the case, any attempt to arrest her may subject you to a vexatious suit, and there are plenty of malicious persons to put you to a great deal of needless trouble."

Both were members of an ancient and honorable fraternity. Wallingford took the stranger by the hand and added, "as a brother — on the obligation of — and — I pledge you my word and honor that this is true to to my best knowledge and belief. I do not wish to disturb the quiet of the family in which Zulette has taken refuge. If you will do me the favor of accepting bachelor's fare, in my own house near at hand, for a day or two, a telegraphic despatch from Charleston will relieve you of all further responsibility. If you wish it I will bring the woman there and place her under charge of a family of old retainers; she will thus be under your own eye till the matter is adjusted."

Southern blood is warm and quick. The stranger took Miles by the hand and shook it heartily with "Done like a planter. Do you play euchre? Let me send these fellows back."

At seven o'clock Miles shouted for Sambo and threw him the reins before the broad stoop of the Van Twiggles, introduced the stranger as his friend Col. Capers, and after breakfast drove him over to the old Manor House, having first sent the body servant as a courier. Col. Capers was treated like a prince for forty-eight hours. At the end of that time a despatch was received from Madame Lorne's attorney, stating in brief that Zulette was free.

In the snow, where, on the day preceding, the abductors of Charity had stationed their vehicle, one of the colored children about the place picked up a knife, bearing on the engraved plate in its horn handle the name Fred Hunter. Wallingford obtained it, recompensing the grinning urchin with a bright silver dollar, large and splendid in his eyes as a full moon.

The young man's soul was roused. He determined if it was possible to arrest and punish the villains, in the hope of discovering the movers of the plot, and, carelessly showing the knife to his Carolinian friend, remarked, "I picked this up: it has some fellow's name on it." The weapon was peculiar, made to be jerked open by the spring upon its back, the blade tough and keen as a stiletto.

Capers took it, picked his teeth with the sharp point, balanced his chair on its rear legs, turned his quid, aimed at the back log with a jet of tobacco juice and quietly replied, "That has seen service. I shouldn't wonder if I knew the fellow. Had him up on a charge of burglary, but he escaped. He is a swell cracksman. I can find him. There is a pigeon-roost of these birds in Orange street, New York. His pal is one Dan Howlitt. Sure as my name is Alf Capers, that's the way they found Zulette. It is an infernal scheme, the whole of it. Mr. Wallingford, I employed a man whom this Fred Hunter introduced to me to hunt up the mulatto woman. I see through it. They discovered a young lady who was pirated away by

some scamps,—I can unravel the hank of yarn. This little girl was abducted by one Tof-ton, alias Gooseneck: he has other names. There was a conspiracy, of which I do not know the particulars, and she was stolen and placed in a fashionable boarding house in our city under lock and key. A fellow in corduroys and plush, with a velveteen jacket like a sportsman's, a wiry fellow, built much as I am, was on track of her. We had a tussle and grabbed Tof-ton's two pals. They were in prison when I left. They are old Botany Bay Convicts and hailed last from California. Not being able to hold them on the charge of abduction we made a case of burglary and retained them on that. This Zulette was missing the day after they were committed, and was finally traced, dressed as a dandy Spaniard, having a well grown child under her charge, to Haswell's schooner. Now these fellows are part of the same gang. I came on to find Zulette in discharge of my duty as an officer of the law; they came probably for the other party."

Capers lit a fresh cigar, smoked awhile in silence and broke out, "I will be flabbergasted to eternal blazes if this aint a cock-fight. Mr. Wallingford take my advice. Keep clear of them. If the head devils of the gang have got loose you will have them on you. If you meet one of them in a close hug touch him up with this," pointing to the knife,—“it's your only nullifier. The worst of it is that there is a thieves' club from London to Sidney who are bound to back each other up. The gallows-birds have spies out like buzzards wherever there is anything worth picking up. When one covey of them are blown up in the Devil's powder-mill a second brood have already chipped their shells." Much more the Carolinian added before he cooled himself with brandy toddy and suffered choler to evaporate in an afternoon doze.

At night, when all was still, Wallingford, first barring the shutters and bolting the doors, commenced his explo-

rations in the dilapidated east room. There the heir-looms of generations were slowly rusting or fading or mouldering away. Well did he recollect the old painting. A sponge dipped in spirits of turpentine revived its freshness. Again the old home of the Wallingfords, again the gray turrets, again the massive oaks and graceful beeches, again the embattled gateway, with moat, and draw-bridge and port cullis, met the sight. What changes might two hundred years have wrought. He was to find this; to conduct thither that gentle girl, whose heart's tendrils seemed to twine around each fibril of his own nature,—to bear her to that roof from which, a banished man, with a price upon his head, and the avenger following, his ancestor had gone forth an exile.

The young man stood and mused. The sword of that stout-hearted gentleman, hacked and stained in honorable service for God's glory and man's rights, there, with curved blade and basket hilt, it hung, as if the silent guardian of hearth and roof-tree. There, too, beside it, gleamed another blade, whose point, keen and glittering as a star, had shone in the torch-light at the icy crossing of the Delaware, and seen good service at Trenton and Princeton and Brandywine and Saratoga. There, too, were armorial bearings old as the Conquest. The old sycamores without creaked and shivered as the passing gusts swept on; creaked and shivered as if the very Spirit of the Past were sailing on the night wind, with beard of snow and lance of polished steel, and airy wings, like banners, crooning to himself a melancholy song of great names gone down to dust.

Miles was no dreamer. The man of the nineteenth century must act, must put spirit in deeds, and write his lyric in events. "Aye," thought the young listener, "wait on, wait on, fierce wind, drive by the old traditions like some phantom ship, that crowds the white sails upon its yards

and flies away. God helping me, I meet the blast, not fly before it." The heart throbbed like the engine's pulse; the will moved like an ocean steamer's mighty wheels; the eye saw the compass that points to God's unerring pole-star; Faith held the chart God's hand inscribed, in letters old as the fires that beamed on Sinai, marked unerringly with all the reefs and headlands, the dim and distant continents and visionary isles of Life's wide sea. He grasped the tiller of destiny, and still thought of the quaint saying of the ancient, "The true man sails the seas with God."

Now another task awaited. The night grew wilder without. The roof shook; the snow, that filled the air, streamed in at every cranny, and crystalized on the garments like powdered meal. The pick and crow, provided with wise forethought, served their master well. Slowly the hearth-stone moved from its ancient bed, and there an oaken casket rewarded the seeker. Painfully replacing the slab, removing also the traces of labor, piling beech and maple upon the wasted fire, wrapping the cloak close, trimming the lights upon the table, and placing a huge screen to serve as some protection from the rawness of the air, he proceeded to open this memento of other years. The rusty bolts gave way at the pressure of a sword's point. Parchments, with huge seals and faded ribbons, pressed tightly together, hid the heavier contents. Here was a commission in the army of the Commonwealth; here a later, from Oliver, Protector of England; here, deeper still, as if selected in haste, rings and crosses and bracelets, curious seals, such as still are found, held as priceless in value, by lovers and hoarders of ancient things. Then, below all, wrapped in doeskin, and sealed with the family seal, glittered the golden treasure of which he was in search, double Louis d'Ors, Spanish coin of Philip the Second, bright, when opened, as if buried yesterday. Below it all reposed a sealed parchment. There, in a bold hand, this last scion of

the Wallingfords beheld inscribed his ancestor's last words. Translated from the quaint English of that day, they may be written :

"Firm in the conviction that the Good Cause never can perish, believing also that at some future day my descendants will return to the possessions of which I am now, by the act of an unjust King, dispossessed, I charge them to remember, in that hour, that my remains be disinterred from the spot where they shall sleep and buried in the family crypt, beneath the church of St. Winifreds. So Joseph, dying in a far country, gave commandment concerning his bones. I will also that my descendant when he shall return to the inheritance shall erect a plain tablet to my memory, inscribing thereon the names of his fathers who were in exile, making honorable record of their deeds of virtue and courage. I bequeath to him my blessing, charging him, as from the dead, to keep faith with all men, to maintain hospitality, to protect all faithful ministers of religion, to show mercy to the poor, to resist oppression, to give due glory to God, and, for Christ's sake, to forgive all enemies even as I do mine."

"Being dead," thought this last descendant, "he yet speaketh," and cried, "Father, father of my father's father, I accept the trust." A calm, quiet rest gently diffused itself, and in the young man's sleep a glory shone. What it was he could not tell, and yet a voice like a trumpet was ringing in the ear, "Onward! Onward!"

CHAPTER XLI.

COOING DOVES AND COWSLIPS.

The meadows at Riverside began to show a scanty green. The swollen waters were brimming in the channels. In the sheep-folds was heard the faint bleating of young lambs. Hyacinth and crocus buds were peering above the rich brown mold in the garden plats. Forsaking the tedded hay impatient cattle hungered for the tender leaf. The wild March winds had lost their force. The first warm days of April were at hand. The garden primrose and the cowslip were soon to blow.

Peter Styles' wife sat in her own cottage room. The kettle was upon the hob, the nicely sanded floor smooth and white as the sea beach. With pussy in her lap little Molly rested upon the cricket at mother's knee. The mother has been reading, but now with folded hands crossed upon the lap, and mild and matronly eyes that overflow with sudden tears, her thoughts go out to seek the lost one. More than six years have elapsed since, with the law's terrors hanging over him, she felt his last kiss.

Steps are heard without. Perhaps it is the gardener, perhaps one of the ditchers; they go home about this time. There is a pause, as of some one irresolute, and then a hand upon the door-lock, and then it opens;—"Father's come home."

In Dr. Bloomfield's study the next morning the wanderer recounted the eventful story of which we have already learned, save the incidents occurring after his encounter

with Handy Ben. Very brief is this portion of the narrative, and told with unaffected mortification and regret. A fever smote the seeker. He lay on the pallet of a hospital till the spring began to open in that more genial climate. Slowly convalescing, the mental powers, exhausted by long-continued tension, but imperfectly fulfilled their office. The kind physician had urged him if he had friends to seek them out, that Nature might have time to carry on her healing processes. Accordingly, finding himself useless there, with most reluctant steps, abandoning the search, a fortnight from the day which saw the invalid's departure from Charleston beheld him landed on British shores again. Peter was indeed like the ghost of his former self.

Already aware, as we have seen, of the finding of the lost heiress at Lucretia Lorne's, the executors now determined on sending to that place an officer of the London police, empowered especially to act on their behalf, entrusting him also with all the information in their power to impart.

The Church of St. Winifreds is still supplied by the curate, the Rev. Dapper Flummery, B. A. The elms on Sloppery Green cast a shade a little deeper and wider against the windows of the Green Lion. The old bar-maid, the one who saw the ghost, is now a comely matron, and the new bar-maid, who has never seen a ghost, wonders what one looks like, and whether she would scream or faint if one should accost her? Aminadab Vampire yet dispenses rhubarb and magnesia, and is bitter against Homœopathy, but holds firm in his faith in the ghostly tradition. Brother Nasal now shines resplendent in the metropolitan hemisphere, and Ebenezer, with lessened rents and diminished congregation, mourns the loss. Brickdust has relinquished trade in favor of a son and heir, who has added to the business a special branch, and manufactures "The celebrated Richmanstown sauce, for meats and soups, from the receipt of a retired Lord Chancellor in

the country." The undertaker sits bolt upright on Sundays at the head of the pew. The deep amen is still as sonorous as ever; but the love of gold, which grows by all it feeds on, now stamps him as the miser. Glim ceases to give suppers and Ebenezer groans that his annual subscription dwindles yearly.

The great Dr. Bumblefuz no longer marches like a turkey gobbler, with consequential strut, from house to house. The coming man on arriving proved to be a brace of daughters, interesting twins. Great Bumblefuz rocks the cradle, while his liege lady, with her too susceptible heart set all to rights, strongly meditates Bloomers, and is Presidentess of the "Sloppery Society of Independent Females for the Promotion of Woman's Rights."

Rectangle Brobose has never married; but the levite, having at last conquered this March wind with genial sunshine, the tobaccoconist has serious thoughts of adopting the Rev. Dapper Flummery's second son, having already officiated as godfather. He has also returned to the old quarters, has a warm chimney corner of his own, rejoices in an especial pair of list slippers, partakes of buttered toast and marmalade with undiminished appetite, and is known in the household as "Uncle Brobose." Mrs. Dapper Flummery, B. A., is not yet Mrs. Bishop of Bangalore.

March winds give place to April showers. Sweetly blow the first wild violets and the primrose wakes and wafts its fragrance to call out the honey bee. A slender spire now rises beyond the pleasant garden where Marian's twenty-four have their play ground. Above it shines the cross; within it, on Sabbaths and holy days, now translated to this field of labor, the Rev Charles Bloomfield ministers to souls. The congregation fills the edifice; for these are stirring times. The waves of thought roll mightily, The straight-forward, earnest young man has proved himself of the church militant, by attacking Satan in his modern strong-

holds, in close, ill-ventilated rooms, and flaring gin palaces, in lazy drawing rooms, where Opulence enjoys the goods of life but shirks its duties, and behind dishonest counters, where short weights are given and false measures used. Yet this is the proprietor of the broad acres of Wingate Hall. His mother is a widow now, yet rejoicing, with all a mother's fondness, in the faith and zeal and godly courage of her son.

"Marian," said Charles, "dear Marian, till we are married I am but half myself. I see you, it is true: I enjoy your sweet society as if I were a brother: but," and now the arm stole around the waist of the loving girl, "but, dearest, a man's home should be where his heart is."

"No, Charles, don't press me. Do you know that I tremble at the thought of marriage. Courting days are very sweet. Would you have them end so soon? Are you tired of them?"

Pleasant as the summer air came the answer, "Darling, I am going to court you as long as we live; court you forever."

"Forever Charlie! forever blessing! forever! Oh! it is sweet to hear you say so, Dearest. But,"—and here the dimpled fingers fluttered as he held the hand,—“but Dearest, do not press me. I am very happy now.” The soft breast heaved a balmy sigh.

The lover echoed that sigh. She answered it. "If my lost Rosa does not come back before the first days of Summer,"—here the bashful, maiden eyes dropped, the little hand fluttered again, the full lip quivered,—“I can't say the rest, Charlie.” He read it in the crimson face, the tear that trickled from the closed lids.

The wilding rose, that opens in the thicket, unfolds its delicate corolla almost effortless and wafts its breath away upon the humid, morning air. But the queen of the garden, rich with all the sweetness of her thousand leaves, that

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blushes through the delicate calyx with a pure carnation,—she droops, she trembles, while the honey-drops fill up her heart of hearts. The bee comes and circles around impatient. The emperor butterfly displays in vain his wings.—The south wind whispers. The nightingale grows weary; but still the virgin flower, sweet to the very heart's core, will not bid a solitary leaf display its beauty to the sun.—The night dew weeps its tears. She wakes and listens. Is that fair Morning Star the only watcher? She feels its trembling beam, and then opens, and, swift as light, the star beam gathers all her fragrance to himself.

Some souls are like the wilding in the hedge, others like the garden's queen. Our garden's queen had felt her morning star. The beautiful, blushing woman woke from all the life-depths. Slowly lifted the silken lashes from wells of sapphire light. The mated Soul looked out. It was for the lover to tremble now. Surface-feeling all the world has known; but Oh! when the great heart leans out from summer balconies of happy thought, and pours for a moment the glorious sunlight of its life's life through crystal windows,—when imperial Womanhood in one glance gives that heart away forever, then, if man's heart be pure, if the eye be single, the joy that moves him partakes of the nature of the bliss that stirs immortals.

The lover's hand had fallen. Tenderly clasping it within her own the maiden said, "I have been reading an American woman's book, Philothea a Grecian Romance,—you shall read it with me one of these days. This authoress clothes our own Divine faith with exquisite classic drapery. I thought, while you were speaking Charlie, that I was not good enough to be a wife. I see your spirit striving to realize an ideal of the Christian man, tender as a woman, humble as a child, brave as a martyr. Come, lean your head upon my shoulder. Do not tremble so. I do not bring you a divine goddess:—only a loving,—Oh! Charlie,

—loving girl. Take me with all my faults; be my head: henceforth my place is the heart.”

“The head and the heart!” well said Marian. The true husband is the head; the true wife is the heart. The feminine qualities of the woman flower in her very brain. The masculine elements of the man shape themselves even through his most tender loves. The genius of the sexes differs. Neither can be its opposite. The unsexed man becomes effeminate without a solitary feminine gift. The unsexed woman is never masculine but simply coarse. The perfect life is not a solo but a duet, and mated souls unite in the marriage melody.

Few had ever seen tears in Charlie Bloomfield’s eyes but he wept now.

Quietly rose this sweet Marian. Till now there was but fire-light in the room. Drawing near a work-stand, lighting the candles, taking from the bosom a little book, she read:

“Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her. She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor, yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. Her husband is known in the gates when he sitteth among the elders of the land. Strength and honor are her clothing, and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household and eateth not the bread of idleness.”

Then, silently breathing a little prayer, the dear one resumed her seat, while this young priest of God’s altar felt his heart melting in tenderness. “Aye, Charlie,” she continued, “this is the wife I fain would be to you. We shall grow old together. Men will wonder if the quiet, aged lady could ever have been beautiful. These glossy locks will whiten. We may shiver at the cold and shrink away from the sunlight; but, Charlie, if we love God and keep His commandments, offering to Him an undivided life,

I know that this is but our love's beginning ; I know that it will never end."

The web which Time spins over the past is like the gossamer tracery woven by the field spider. So lightly does the delicate net-work hang suspended over the chance flower that has caught its folds, that a struggling insect which it entangles, a stray breath of air that bends its filaments, loosens the slight thread and it is gone.

Thus, this April night, some breath, some struggling recollection, gathered to itself the drooping vails woven by the subtle fingers of the years from the mind of the bereaved mother of Charity Green. The cicatrized wound opened afresh, and, when a sound of carriage wheels upon the gravel announced that an evening visitor was at hand, the lovely widow startled with a sudden pang.

The stately, middle-aged gentleman who draws nigh cannot see, upon that dimly outlined face, half in the shadow, the woe that seeks to burst its boundaries. His are lover's words, lover's looks, lover's prospects. The suitor has entered this evening with a fixed determination to win from the lovely enslaver a promise of speedy nuptials. He has the tact to discover in a moment that no common grief tugs at the heart strings, but the man who can write plays fit to be acted, knows, full well, that, for a true wooer, the best opportunity is when his mistress weeps. As her sorrow more and more lifts its gusts and heaves its billows, the delicate nature, that, at first, would wrestle with it in loneliness, is driven to a shelter, and grief becomes almost a joy as the fond wife buries her face upon the husband's bosom and weeps it out.

Woman, indeed, may be a summer hermitress, but, when the winter kills the clinging plants to which the gentle hands loved to minister, and drives the soul to live within itself, she murmurs "Take me home."

When, therefore, the mother, pining for her Rose, would

sit in that cold memory-chamber, shutting out even hope's most blessed light and love's warm sunshine, when Hugh Brompton's impassioned greeting called out but a sad 'Leave me,' what did the wooer do? Did he fuss out words of condolence? Not a bit. Did he leave her to wrestle in solitude with bitter reminiscences till the stinging frost should fall and blight the springing heart hopes? It was the lover's opportunity, and, drawing to the fair one's side the most comfortable seat within reach, he gently took the hand, remaining silent until he felt the icy coldness leaving it and the warm glow returning. Then, quietly making another little move, the Squire of Dames slightly touched it to his lips and sent a tiny message through the quick, electric nerves, to whisper lover's consolation.

A dry, tearless grief, for the time, is hopeless. Beware of that, lover! then your hopes are winter-killed. When sorrow grows teary and dissolves itself in humid rain, then, pour upon it all the heart's rich sunshine. Leave the little clouds awhile. Watch them as they silently rise; tinge them with rainbows; when they melt in blue heaven venture another, and another; till the fluttering fingers timidly withdraw.

Commend me to a gallant knight who comes with high purpose and woos a tearful charmer till she leaves the shadow and turns toward the sun. A silent half-hour passed away. A faint, low-breathed sigh, and, as one who awakens from some fearful swoon, the lady turned, whispering, "You here? I did not know it. It was kind in you to stay. Too kind, too kind!"

Then Marie began to weep again, "Am I never to find Rosa! I call as it seems by night, and, when I waken, half imagine that she will answer at the call. We are selfish, Hugh, to love each other."

When a woman begins to reproach herself to a suitor for being selfish in loving him, if she is true and does not flat-

ter for a purpose, he may depend that the coy lips may soon be prevailed upon to name the wedding day. So Squire Brompton's eyes twinkled, though he veiled their joy under a look of affectionate and serious concern.

"Nay, Charmer," and now the wooer's accents had as much of the dove's coo in them as a soul that had fed for thirty years on Spenser and Shakspeare could insinuate into a not unpleasing voice. The middle aged gentleman forgot, that, for him, this world's youth had passed, this world's summer seen its first fruits fallen. "Nay, Charmer, a selfish soul refuses to make others happy. Then the tones, rich and impassioned, rang in music through the room, "I was growing old, prematurely old, and all my manhood wasting. I was but a fruitless tree, casting an unwholesome shade that withered up the very plants that seemed to grow beneath its branches. Oh! Marie, were you selfish when you came like my own lost youth, like that youth's unfulfilled ideal, and a dead life once more bloomed from its dust. I have gone back to Eden, Marie, for I have gone back to love. Old, generous impulses, that left me as I grew cold and stern and faithless, troop again through the soul's open doors and whisper, all in your voice, all with your smile, of duties to young and old, of kindnesses to rich and poor;—and oh! it needs but your hand, firmly clasped in mine, and then there is not a viewless essence of them all but promises to take a luminous image gladdening the sight, shaped before men's eyes in years of action. You selfish? Are the clouds selfish when they moisten the thirsty desert, and change to violets and daisies as they fall?"

A burst of genuine feeling will call out responses in a woman's nature. When, therefore, the lover ceased, he saw the rosy light returning, the ripe lip curving to its accustomed outline, and the carnation on the cheek, and the daylight's glory in the eye. The night let down its quiet curtain. The lamps were lit, the shadows danced

upon the wall. The strong man, the wise man, then, with gentle earnestness, allowing to his friend no second thought, suffering no relapse into sorrow, once again resuming the lover's privilege, and venturing to clasp the coy fingers, took up the little book, bound in vellum, clasped with a cross, and opened it at the marriage service, with the remark, "It may be well, my dear, for you to read this ceremony, as I expect that soon you may be called upon to repeat a portion of it."

The fair friend did not at first divine his meaning. A quick glance, and then the answer, "You are a daring prophet."

Not less quick came the reply. "Let those kind lips assure me that I am a true one."

Marie answered, "A true one, Hugh; can you forget the past?"

"The past! Love has no past, no future. It is the sun that always shines, though sometimes that shining is invisible. What if the past, that you deplore, conceals some merciful, benignant purpose? I cannot take a Christian's faith in shreds and patches. It must be everything; it is everything. We see now the tapestry of events on the reverse side. Confused threads, that cross apparently to no purpose, bewilder the mind that doubts and questions. But, when the end of the Great Designer is accomplished, we shall discern that all this complicated network was but a needful part of the process, by which the picture was being woven, the flowering picture, on which we are to tread."

"Does not this view make evil necessary, Hugh?"

"Not a whit, not a whit. He is but a shallow-brained philosopher who fails to discover that beautiful human characters are slowly built in the midst of seeming evils, while they act in an entire freedom, accepting for their own the good, the lovely and the true. The deeds which

abandoned men persist in doing are overruled and made the resisting circumstances which try the spirits of the pure, serve as exercises in the school of patience, give to them a field for the evolution of latent virtues, and slowly ripen them to a deep capacity of ever-springing joy. I say this though it condemns me, an idler for many years; but I feel its truth nevertheless."

"But, Hugh, you saw me just now with all my old wounds torn open. What prospect have you of happiness with one whose very reason has been impaired through suffering?"

"Prospect of happiness, do you ask? Has the tired bird a prospect of happiness when, wearied with a flight that seemed interminable, the low cooing of the mate betokens that home is nigh? Come! come! Whether the future has good hap or sorrow, good hap will be sweeter, sorrow less if shared together."

The groves at Riverside were now, as the pleasant April wore away, returning to their vernal foliage. Dr. Hartwell grew impatient and daily paced the study floor with quicker and more nervous steps. Still no letters came from Charleston. Fearing that his messenger might have been perhaps overtaken by illness, or have met with a mishap, the Rector called one pleasant morning for his horse and ambled over to Brompton Hall.

To his great surprise the stately house was undergoing a thorough renovation, the upholsterers, the painters and the gilders were transforming the sumptuous antique apartments, as the Divine remarked afterward, into a second Fairy-land. The guest met the friend of whom he was in search at a late breakfast in the library, nor did he fail to express surprise: "Why, Brompton, one would think from appearances that you were about to bring home a bride." Perhaps the Doctor shot more than a random arrow, and

rubbing the hands, continued, "I am about to saddle you at least with one fatherly responsibility."

Squire Brompton gaily responded, "So eloquent an advocate of the holy ordinance of matrimony need not be surprised when I confess a sincere conversion. I am about, Doctor, to take a wife, and need not say that, as indispensable to the ceremony, we trust to have the pleasure of being united by the Rector of Riverside. The old house has need of putting on its best looks no less than its master. What news from abroad?"

"I am sorry to say, none whatever. I had almost come to the conclusion to undertake the search in person, and this is the occasion of my visit this morning. What do you think?"

"Think? That my old friend is beside himself. I would not trust your gold spectacles as far from the Priory much less their owner."

"But," replies the Rector, "Trusty is worth nothing outside of accounts; Parks handles a case in court, but is blind as a bat beyond chambers. God helping me this child shall be recovered. We have spared no exertion. It is now certain that she is living and in perilous circumstances. We hear nothing from the special messenger, not even of his arrival. Styles, recovering slowly, is not in a condition to cross the water again. You must go or I."

"Neither, Doctor, when younger blood and quicker wit is at command. Why did you not think of young Bloomfield?"

"Pooh, pooh!" answered the Divine, "I can't send him. The boy's in love."

Squire Brompton replied, with a low bow, "So am I. But, seriously, have you observed that some men prosper in whatever they undertake. Our friend Bloomfield is one of them. All doors fly open when he approaches. He conquered his father's obstinate prejudices, and became a

parson. In his first parish, dirt and vagrancy and drunkenness shook their skirts and emptied themselves into the streets. When those two cooing turtles, Marian and himself, turned, the one her good house into a foundling asylum and the other his loose thousands into a chapel for the poor, our friend the Bishop remarked to me, with tears in his eyes, that the young couple were dear as his own children. The lad works there laboriously as if he were a poor curate, —ten times harder than your curate does,—and yet is a gentleman of ample fortune. Were he not a preacher he would make a mark as a poet and man of letters; but I verily believe he would rather reclaim a drunken villager than be the author of *Paradise Lost*. Let your curate officiate, then, in his place, while the good lad runs across and back again."

Dr. Hartwell considered. "There is wisdom in your counsel. Let me see: it is now the twentieth of April. Two days for a start and twelve for the journey will land him in New York by the fourth of May. He is to be married, as a good girl whispered to me, in the early summer. Hardly time for him to return. Let your man drive me down. I will see him at once. If he fails me, farewell till the old man has tried his fortune.

Not thus did they part. Dr. Hartwell took a substantial lunch, while his friend made an end of breakfast; and then they separated, Squire Brompton's carriage bearing the Rector on the way. Let us now look upon a very different colloquy.

"Dinnis, ye spalpeen, will ye nivir be done with the spach-cock? Three times have I whistled Garryowen, and lost tin pounds to myself playin' short whist, one hand against the other."

"Aisy, Michael, aisy. Pale you the limmins. I'll not thrust ye with the sperets. The spach-cock has taken the mustard pottle under his left arm, and cries for a dhrop of

wather to aise his thirst. Lave the cards alone, will ye's; it spoils luck. Faix and I am as dhry meself as a broiled mackril."

True to their national infirmity, two worthy sons of Hibernia, whom we must make known as Dennis O'Raferty and Michael Cogan, were concocting, in their bachelors' apartments, such stimulating and thirst-producing edibles as might drive a little party roaring mad over the drink till the small hours, and send them home to the nightmare and a thumping headache. Galway is Galway, though it emigrates to remote Tasmania or colonizes the States.

"Spaking of the spatch-cock reminds me, Dinnis, of the Widow O'Keefe and the traveling policeman. Faix, she noorsed him through his faver that he took a ship-board. It cost her nigh saixty guineas; for she put him in lodgings at her own expinse, and had three docthors and the praste. As he came to his sivin' senses, there was no end to the stir-about, and then the bottled ale; and whin he called at last for something substantial, and she came in with the tray, with a rasher on it, and a thrifling matter of saix eggs, to say nothing of the oysters, she dhroped on her knees behind the bed, and vowed a holy candle to St. Bridget in the gratitude of her heart.

"Then, seein' that the ould sayin' ran, 'Take a hair of the dog that bit ye's,' she hinted that he could do no less than show his riverence for her good behavior by making her Mrs Jobson.

"Tearanages, was iver sich a name? Ould O'Keefe, when we waked him dacently, with a hoondred candles, and saixty of his coontrymen, dhrinking to his sow's health and a safe passage through poorgatory, little did he dhrame that M^{rs}. O'Keefe would iver forget the Milesian blood, to tuck a white-livered Englishman in his best bed.

"Well," as the fox said when he came a coorting the geese, "I've jist dhropt in to pay me compliments," the

officer began to comether the widow, and at last axed her to name the day. She mixed him a glass of punch, sthrong, for he was wake and needed propping on his pins, and thin she mixed a glass with a thrifle less of sperits in it for herself, and said, "Sure and what's agraiaible to yerself is agraiaible to me. It's now Monday, and any day after the middle of the week's unlucky."

"Then she supped her glass as if consithering, and, while he moved his aisy chair on the rollers a little nairer and sqazed her hand, she consulted the Mass Book for a lucky day and said, "Father O'Shaugnessy can be spooked to in the mornin, but the ould man's apt to fergit a weddin that he poots off beyond the same night." So they were married. Faix but his is a warm nest. The ould stone-mason left her with three big houses and not a childer in the world."

This authentic conversation, reader, informs us of the fate of the derelict police officer. It seems that this Widow O'Keefe, returning to America from a visit to the Ould Island, was a fellow passenger in the second cabin of the steamer. On sociable terms at starting, Irish warm-heartedness was not slow to nurse the invalid when a turn of fever had overtaken him. Pity grew to love, as the hospitable widow saw the fine looking fellow on his way to convalescence, and, when he should have been, had health served, in search after the heiress, Mistress O'Keefe was "spakin to the praste." Recovering to find that there were two of them, the official, now translated into a man of ease and income, notified his superiors that a dangerous illness had prevented the discharge of his mission. Here Mr. Thomas Jobson vanishes from our sight.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE STRAIGHT GATE.

"Bless de Lor', Massa Wallingford," said black Sambo, now taken into the employ of Charity's friend, "bless de Lor', I've 'sperienced religion.' Glory to God." The ebony face glistened. There was a deep pathos in the voice. This was in the editor's sanctum. "Well Sambo," was the considerate answer, "I rejoice to hear it, but remember that it is one thing to experience religion and another to practice it. If your experience evaporates after a few prayers and a little shouting you will be all the worse for ever having had it. Take it moderately, Sambo, and recollect that the essence of the faith consists in keeping God's commandments."

"Jest what de preacher say, Massa Wallingford. Him tell em dat de bad place was hotter for dem ere apostles den for anybody else." The divine probably said apostates. "I don't mean to be one of dem are apostles any how."

There are years, when, from no perceptible cause, the great lakes of the American continent rise above their accustomed level and cover the wide margin with fertility.—Analogous to this, periods also recur in which that latent element of devout emotion, which sleeps in every hamlet like a mountain tarn surrounded by its hills, comes up to overflow the banks. Then frivolous and giddy young people, and sometimes gray haired men and women, seem roused as if some irresistible power were taking possession of the heart. When the flood reaches its height, nightly meet-

ings are held in the churches and men walk the streets as if they were wrestling in soul with the vast realities of the world to come.

One of these periodical revulsions of sentiment from the material to the spiritual side of life, without a premonition of its advent, was now, with mild but mighty force, passing over the land. First to take advantage of every devout sensation, while yet old Dominie Van Cortland mused over the venerable folios, young Theodore Marston, the earnest and enthusiastic preacher in a little Methodist chapel near Tarrytown, had drawn his flock together, and sought, while a viewless spirit of love seemed brooding on the air, to rouse careless neighbors to the interests of the kingdom which is not of this world. Sambo and his Dinah were among the first converts. The interest deepened and extended. Old Aunt Belinda, the sable cook at the Van Twiggles, was under 'concern of mind' and soon enthusiastic shoutings and clapping of hands announced that she had 'found a hope.'

The quadroon, now making herself useful in the household with the quick needle, gazed upon the scene in the rear kitchen, went to her room and fell upon the floor in an agony. Kept, as the slave had been, in profound ignorance of the simplest religious truths, her dark mind full of African superstitions about the Obi and the evil eye, wearing talismans on the person and dwelling near Nature's shady side in revery and dream, it was an easy thing for her to feel the subtle spell that even had strength to bow down great intellects before it.

Belinda, Dinah and Sambo lifted her to the bed, and then, while the hours moved toward midnight endeavored, in their uncouth manner, to enlighten the beclouded, understanding. Their words were unintelligible. Zulette raved wildly and incoherently. The honest colored people at last shook their heads mysteriously, and muttered that she was

possessed. After midnight the watcher slept but awoke early in the morning, unable to partake of food, and sat rocking herself to and fro, weeping, wringing the hands and refusing to speak to any one.

Blushing Mrs. Hans Bronk came home after the breakfast hour. The bride had been spending a few days in a round of visits, accompanied by Charity. Belinda, as the door was opened, threw her arms around the young mistress's neck, half shouting, half sobbing, "Miss 'Trinie, Miss 'Trinie, me's ridden in de golden chariots. Me's crossed de Jordan. Glory."

Silently wondering, our treasure looked at the old colored woman, with no disposition to smile. "Thought," sings a true poet,

"Thought is deeper than all speech,
Feeling deeper than all thought :
Souls to souls can never teach
What unto themselves was taught.

"We are spirits clad in vails :
Man by man was never seen :
All our deep communion fails
To remove the shadowy screen."

Finding in that book, which was to her the very oracle of light and truth, a faith, which, however imperfectly wrought into philosophy, yet kindled life with supernatural glory, she could feel that this black woman had been touched in the soul's nerves by a spark dropped out of Heaven. A quiet joy lit the fine face. Sweet recollections of hours gone by, when Neeshema first learned to pray, and the peace which the pure angels inherit swept in waves of mellow music over the soul of the aged Indian woman, and hushed its passions all to rest; thoughts of quiet rambles in deep woods, when, resting beneath some venerable tree her lips had slowly repeated the touching Gospel scenes;

thoughts of tranquil reveries that followed, when the dear Master of the household seemed to breathe in audible melody from some invisible habitation of the blessed and promise life and happiness beyond this transitory scene, such thoughts, picture after picture, grew almost visible, and the dear one spoke, "Aunty, you must be very good now. I know what you mean. I have read it all." The impulsive negress clasped the speaker with both hands, "Bless de Lor, Miss Charity; bless de Lor. I see it in your eyes," and then the old, quavering voice burst forth,

"Oh! how happy are they,
Who their Savior obey,
And have laid up their treasure above;
No tongue can express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

Reader, I sketch life as it is. Not mine the hand that bodies forth that which has no substance, and gives to it a seeming reality; not mine, I humbly pray, the narrow mind that mocks at that which it cannot comprehend. I know that God made daisies and harebells, and that not one of them is forgotten in His sight. Shall I dare then to think that He forgets the human spirit? The bee finds her sweet repast provided in the blossom of the delicate white clover; and is there no mystical soul-food, no unseen manna, that drops to feed the fainting family of men, and make them strong for the race of immortality? Thy viewless hand, Great Artist, paints the cheek of the most ephemeral blossom. Shall not Thy hand, in colors all divine, delineate upon the airy blossom of the human spirit some penciled outline, some supernal gleam? Shall not the high truths of thine own great Oracle assume objective splendor to the eye of wrapt, adoring faith? The young fledgling in the nest feels the mother's heart above it, and is still: shall

human fledglings not feel Thee? Oh, these yearnings, these yearnings for glory and virtue and immortal life! dost Thou not quicken, as well as answer them at last?

The maiden withdrew and sought her own room.—There, still rocking to and fro, mourning like one bereaved of every friend, who will not be comforted; picking, too, with convulsive fingers, at her dress, with glaring eyes, like those of a half-human tigress, who knows that her two natures are struggling for mastery, and now feels herself rising up into the woman, and then in the reaction settling down into the fierce instincts of the brute, the rosy maiden, fresh as the June flower, beheld Zulette.

Softly closing the door, quietly replenishing the smoldering, decaying fire, Charity drew nigh the mourner, laid her pure cheek against the tawny forehead, felt the hot temples burn, and gently chafed them with her cool hands, moistened a napkin from the ewer and bound it there to draw away the incipient fever, sprinkled a perfumed mist upon the heavy tresses, lifted the window a little for the reviving air, and whispered at last, "Dear nurse, let me share your troubles."

The tall woman slowly rose, her face working with excitement: "Miss, the Obi has followed us. Black worms are eating into me. See them! see them!"—and now the eyes of the quadroon were glaring—"take them from me." Then, with a look of loathing, the unhappy creature spat with all her might, and cried: "They hang upon my lips; they burrow in my skin. The Obi! the Obi!"

These were the exclamations that had frightened the simple negroes who were her watchers on the previous night. The young girl drew her little book from the balmy folds of the boddice, murmuring, "Come, nurse, it is good for you to feel so. These things were all in your heart; they are your sins. The Good Man who lives above the sky is driving them from you. Is it not better to see them

and feel them, as they are cast out, than to be eaten up by them without knowing it?"

Wiser minds than mine have written of the vivid imagination which the African inherits. To him the subjective and the objective are near akin. All his thoughts move in pictures. Possessed of the oriental, not the occidental nature, every thought takes shape within the mental retina.

Was our foundling right, and did the latent evils of this woman's heart, stirred from their habitations by some Divine visitation,—did they, instead of being felt merely as wrongs, of which the conscience must repent and the will fight against,—did they clothe themselves in visible imagery, obedient to some unsuspected law? I stand now upon the confines of a realm where it is not safe to venture without some guiding clue. But, reader, what if our virtues and our vices, in the next stage of being, do actually, as in this poor quadroon's fancy, become objects that we see? What if our pleasant vices do thus return to sting us; while every act of kindness, and every deed of love, and every silent longing that became a generous self-sacrifice,—is wrought in deathless imagery of glory? Years ago, while traveling through that New World to which, while recalling these incidents, my mind has turned so often, I remember taking up a little volume of lyrics written by a poet whom England should know far better than she does,—Whittier. Quaintly but melodiously he sings:

"We shape ourselves the joy or fear
Of which the coming life is made,
And fill our future's atmosphere
With sunshine or with shade.

"The tissue of the life to be
We weave with colors all our own,
And, in the field of Destiny,
We reap as we have sown.

"Still shall the soul around it call
The shadows which it gathered here,
And, painted on the eternal wall,
The Past shall reappear."

The Apocalypse, as the negro reads it, becomes all one transcendent vision before the mental sight, until the senses imagine to themselves that all that glory passes in pomp and pageantry before them. The authoress of Uncle Tom's Cabin, when she makes her humble hero tell the fair child Eva of the golden palaces, and the burning thrones, and the sea of glass mingled with fire, and the white-robed ones standing with harps in their hands and singing loud, triumphant anthems, unclasped a true page.

But if the Christian negro translates faith into symbols and realizes a future Heaven with the very eyes, those in whose veins tropical blood yet lingers, however diluted, in states of moral evil behold the terrific reverse of the picture. Their feelings become sights. The greatest of poets, when we analyze the matter, is allied, by the subtlety and transparency of his mental constitution, to those great, grown children who bask upon the torrid breasts of the tropic, and fuse reason and imagination into a common faculty. The dark race see, they feel, they do all but write: this requires other gifts. To Uncle Tom the Divine thoughts of the Scriptures had become dramatic and evolved themselves in paintings of the sky. To Zulette, unreclaimed from a state of natural and moral degradation, unaccustomed to discriminate between good and evil, with a lip that had tasted sin's sweet poison, with a struggling moral nature roused from its torpor, feeling perhaps clearly for the first time the chaos that reigns within the breast, till God has reconciled it to Himself, her subjective world evolved its creations, not as beauties, but as deformities, foul and terrible.

The world's dramatist makes Macbeth see the air-drawn

dagger, and the damned spot that murder leaves, palpable, upon the hand. Shakspeare but painted life as he saw it,—sat humbly while Reality, the drama's master, let her mantle fall upon him. The quadroom had never heard of the dramatist but she had seen blood.

Slowly speaking Zulette began again, "They come and they go—that's Janet, the Scotch girl;" then, shrieking exclaimed, "Estelle, Estelle, your child was not killed by me." Crimes that inscribed no record on the night wind; crimes that left no trace in the seductive voice and manner of Lucretia Lorne; crimes that poor young creatures, but half consenting to, were yet involved in, through woman's weakness and man's cruelty; crimes darkly familiar to the slave of a very mistress of the arts that bring gray hairs in sorrow to the grave, that make aged widows frantic over lost daughters and dissolute and ruined sons; crimes that come with pale, baby faces, and look all piteously and gasp out with little voices a sound that turns to awful maledictions when it bursts upon the guilty heart,—such crimes were garnered up within the memory-halls of the quadroom.

The past deeds of this wild heart, called from their graves in the deep valley of remembrance, were coming up to stand where Conscience, pale and inexorable, was to pronounce upon their character. Our clergymen of the establishment insist that religion should be quiet and dignified, that all its exercises should be presided over by decorum and regularity. Too frequently, instead of confirming, by godly precept, such burning sentences as fall from the great souls of our Wesleys and our Bunyans, who verily feel that man must turn from his iniquities or die, they push good men out into uncongenial associations, till sects multiply. Far better it would be could all but come to the admission of the common truth, that diversities of temperament exhibit diversities of mental action under the influence of the same Divine Spirit, that with some the growth of religion is from

childhood like the lily from its root, that with others, over whom the vices have passed and the waters rolled and the impurities gathered, there is a crisis, when the submerged moral nature comes up, as if a continent of drowned men should rise, pressing its way against an overhanging ocean till it reached the light of common day.

If even the child, guilty of a momentary fault against its mother, must wrestle with itself till repentance comes, and not without a struggle be restored to the accustomed place, can human beings, grown hard in evil, without some stirrings up of latent faculties, some wrestlings against their evil selves, some fearful experiences of the resisting might of Satan,—can they return to their Father's house?

Charity stood beside the quadroom, and now with arms crossed upon the maiden breast, and looks that beamed seraphic. Then the words came as if given her.

"Come to the Savior! Come to the Savior! There are your sins. You have done many deeds of evil in your life. I love you all the same, Zulette, and God loves you too."

Sabbaths were not known in that corrupt house at Charleston. The policy of Madame Lorne had been to keep her servant conscienceless. Utterly secluded from religious opportunities, she knew not, therefore, that a real and living Savior of sinners had ever died upon the cross, had ever baptised poor penitents with His Divine nature, had ever taken away their sins.

To her this miraculous Gospel, narrated in simple language through Charity's dear lips, was a new revelation.

Revelations are common in our time. Owen and Comte, the Saint Simonians, and a troop besides, all have their revelations. Men ignore alike the testimony of the rocks and the witness of the heart, and ask for a Neology to extinguish, with its icy fog, the Gospel fire; and new revelations come. There is always a tempting fiend, who whispers smooth words, who spins subtle arguments, and paints

delusive visions in the minds of godless men, who wish a road to Heaven other than the straight and narrow way. But revelations come to the good as well, come when the chisel of the stone-mason chips away the foundation of a godless Naturalism, come when a trusting heart takes home the Bible to itself and sees eternity mirrored within its pages, and so translates them into fresh experience.

The Bible! We lie upon the summer grass: we listen to the music, that, mingled with a thousand odors, wafts itself away. The bird-song hushes as the sun goes down, and then while stars innumerable light their lamps, the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork. We rise and slowly pass from all this sacred spectacle. The village grave-yard, with its mossy head-stones, the waving branches of elm and willow, the swift waters that darken beneath the bridge and glide away beyond the alders,—they all propound the same enigma. All declare as one, "Life is a mystery: who shall fathom it? The Bible alone contains the solution of that mystery. The Bible, read with the eye of faith, the Bible, drank in through eager lips, till every vein grows ruddy with its crimson life-streams,—that solves the secret, solves it to the trusting heart, solves it with a certainty that leaves no after-doubt; and then, when the meaning of this wondrous existence grows clear, it takes us by the hand "through golden gateways into Heaven."

And now the Bible came to the relief of this afflicted soul. As a dewdrop melts, dissolved in sunshine, the tear that twinkled in Charity's loving eye grew lustrous in the beams of her faith-enkindled countenance. The book spoke as if the Divine Voice indeed were in it. That the evils of her own nature were swarming out from the soul and taking shape before the eyes, was a thought, which, when once uttered, became a full conviction. That she saw her own heart unveiled, and its memories let loose and flying, like

the wild animals whom the fire drives from the prairie, was the truth that brought home to the spirit, as nothing else could have done, what latent guilt was couched within its depths.

The doctrine of an Atoner, of one who had given His own life to expiate the heart's guilt, and who had power by His Divine Influence to banish all its crime, all its fear, and then to come in and take a full possession, this doctrine, which the worldly-wise so often deride, when once propounded grew into clearest shape before the mind's eye.

It was the work of many hours. Paroxysm after paroxysm, as sin after sin grew into form and took a visible mental shape, with intervals between in which it seemed as if a stony despair was petrifying the features, consumed the day and night. Her tortures became intolerable. She screamed that "fire was burning within the breast, and that the water which she tasted only aggravated its fury," and still the cry was that "her heart was so hard that it would not repent."

About midnight, while Charity was kneeling by the bedside, her face bathed in tears, Zulette, now much exhausted, after undergoing, as it seemed, a severe mental struggle, during which her face had been buried in the pillow, while her teeth chattered and a cold perspiration stood upon the forehead, turned to the faithful watcher and exclaimed, "Oh! Miss, I must be lost, must be lost. There is no help for me. I cannot,—I have tried,—I cannot make my heart good."

Charity calmly answered, "Does my dear nurse want her heart made good?" The woman moaned and seemed as if in combat with some malignant power, but at length responded as if with a dying effort, "I do."

It was no mortal wisdom, no mortal love, no mortal strength, that, in this moment, making for its earthly tabernacle that slender girl, preached Jesus and the cross.

"Oh! Zulette, Zulette," and as she spoke the great tears rolled down the cheeks, "You have now done all that He requires; have given your heart to Him; asked Him to save. And see! He's coming. There is no form that I can clearly fix my eyes upon, but the power is descending to rest on you. Oh! Zulette," and here the voice was as of æolian music chiming through the night, "make ready for the bridegroom. He is coming to fill you with Himself. Hear what he says, 'Though your sins are as scarlet they shall be white as wool. Come unto Me, all ye who weary and are heavy laden, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' Only believe. Only take Him at His word. Only give your heart away."

A tender silence reigned. Without the moon was shining over broad, snow-covered fields, as if on beds of frosted silver. The maiden twined her pure arms around the neck of the quadroon and whispered, "Come nurse, rise and kneel. You are now in the dark valley. Beyond it shines the sun. Come, nurse, your sins have gathered together to keep the Savior out, but your heart is ready to receive Him. Cry, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.'"

Like some wan shape, who, buried in a trance that men mistook for death, yet feels that all is not dead, and half revives, with heaving chest and tingling limbs, to burst its coffin lid, to tear from its face the close, confining bandages, and then, still immured within the vaulted grave-chamber, to cry for one to unbolt those ponderous doors and lead her out to friends, and tender kisses, and sweet air and genial, refreshing heat,—the pallid woman, rising as it seemed within herself, cried aloud, "Oh, God of Mercy, I give myself to Thee! Drive away my sins; pardon me; give me peace!"

Suddenly, as when iron vault doors are unbolted, and the husband enters to the fair girl who is his bride, whom Death had seemed to claim, and who had been buried from his

sight, and lifts her from the broken casket where earth's beauty is all hid away at last to mingle with the elements,—and calls her his own, and bears her in his manly arms, and soothes her still with gentle kisses, and whispered words of peace, till her own home receives her to its bliss,—so came the Viewless One, the latchets of whose shoes we are not worthy to unloose. So, clasping in spirit that broken-hearted penitent, He took her to Himself. He claimed her soul.

“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth ; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”

A smile of heavenly rapture rested upon the uplifted face of the mourner ; the heart, a moment since one tumult of remorse and fear, grew preternaturally still. Charity, who knelt by her, partially supporting the exhausted frame, at length arose and murmured words of thanksgiving. Still as was the night, if Holy Oracles are true, melodious bliss reigned far above us. Is there not joy in Heaven among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth ?

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE BROADWAY CHAMPAGNE CELLAR.

Under a massive warehouse where fashionable ladies, waited on by obsequious clerks, beheld the richest of Parisian goods spread out for their inspection, its character indicated without by a flaming, transparent sign of many colors, gay nymphs of the pavé, prowling after nightfall for their prey, entering not by the broad staircase on the main thoroughfare but from a side street, found sumptuous supper rooms at their command. Loathing to breathe for a moment this polluted air, we must nevertheless point out at least one scene transpiring on a March night within its precincts.

The theatres are out. The last loaded omnibuses rattle past. The good, the virtuous, the industrious, if abroad at this late hour, plod hastily to their homes. A drowsy policeman may be seen here and there, his profession denoted by a star.

The windows of the establishment, partially hidden by the pavement, reveal nevertheless a tempting display of meats and wines, while huge baskets of oysters loll upon the iron steps or half lean against the pillars. A large screen within, covered with play bills, is so arranged that while the tippling bar, with its brilliant array of cut glass decanters and shining goblets and seductive paintings, shall invite the passer-by, the persons of those partaking of its beverages may yet be concealed.

Within we find an open saloon, one side divided into little stalls, each arranged with cushioned seats and a marble

table in the center, and heavily curtained to seclude the guests. A youthful Israelite, as betokened by beaked nose and dark eyes, is compounding steaming punches while we enter. The place reeks with tobacco and the huge spit-toons swim with saliva or are choked with remnants of cigars.

A richly dressed female cautiously draws a curtain which seems suspended over the doorway at the remote end of the long apartment. Her bold, flashing eyes dart a searching glance. The door is slightly ajar. She beckons to the bar-keeper. We must listen to their colloquy.

"Who are the three men whom you are mixing those toddies for? I saw them enter but did not make out fully who they were."

"Thieves on a lay. One of them weak on his pins; the others in prime condition."

"How do you know they are on a lay?"

Here the toddy mixer grinned and crooked his finger and with it drew down the under lid of the sinister eye till the whitish yellow ball stared from its place, before he answered, "That's a professional secret, gall. They are old stagers, flush. Who have you got in number three?"

"A jewsharp. Didn't you hear me play him down the stairs? He's a raw boy from up the river. His daddy sent him with a load of poultry and I've sweetened his lemonade for him. Send in raw oysters and a bottle of champagne."

While this dialogue takes place, cautiously peer, good reader, through this red curtain. You have seen the gentlemen before. The one with the jug of punch and the oyster stew was called when we met him last Col. Tofton. They address him as Gooseneck, this being a professional soubriquet. Those opposite, their faces in the shadow, though now with beard and whiskers colored differently from when we saw them last, are the murderer's associates,

Cunning Joe and Handy Ben, each with a steaming glass before him. Major Chelmsford is known by the name of Tim Malmsey, his friend is Ducklegs. They pass for pugilists.

"Gentlemen," says the barkeeper, slightly removing the drooping folds, "sorry to trouble you," and here he made a knowing sign which indicated caution. A policeman was sauntering down the steps, apparently with no other object than that of lighting a segar held carelessly in the hand.

The three ate and drank in silence. Again the drapery moved and Mordecai, this time with another curious motion, whispered, "Brown Lize has a pigeon: number three." Here his eyes glistened, while he added, "Snacks and mum; but don't tickle him on the premises."

Chelmsford looked at his right hand neighbor. Ben gruffly replied, "She'll dose him twenty hours good. Small fry. Howsumdever let's look at him."

Bearing politely on a waiter a second bottle of champagne, followed by the thief the barkeeper vanished through the little door. If there is any comedy in sin, that walks blindfolded to its ruin, it was here. Upon the plush sofa, filling all one side of the snug room, sat a verdant youth gobbling oysters. Near him, on a slender chair, emptying a smoking bowl of the same delicious bivalves, painted to the eyes, her low and sensual forehead whitened till the flakes fairly glittered, sat the shameless one.

The fresh bottle is opened and placed between the two, Handy Ben meanwhile listening behind the door.

Bumpkin. "We don't have no such sweet cider up in our diggins. It makes a feller feel fine. Do you like dough nuts? Cause, if you do, there's nigh about half a peck in the old yaller chest in the sloop's cabin. Kind a guess you'd have lost your way, wouldn't you, in that big street, with all them stages rattling about? Maybe some feller would a hooked you? That puts me in


mind kind-a; there was a gall nigh about hooked in Wiltsevleet at Hans Bronk's wedding. Pesky fine gal, too, but stuck up mightily. She carried her head like a three year old as is'nt broke to harness. That darned skezix that was to stand up with them, gosh! he snapped areound like fire crackers. He put his dog on their track and smelt em out like so many wood chucks. I'll beswitched if he did'nt drive arter em like a streak of greased thunder down a Whig liberty pole. He bust up his old sleigh against the locomotive and diskivered the gall in the express train. Zakky! this ere sweet cider of yourn riles a feller's ebenezzer. Spruce bear aint nothing to it. I won't drink nothing else as long as dad has a rooster in the poultry yard.—Darn the expense!"

Bumpkin roused himself on the flag stones the next morning about day break, in a neighboring alley. The doughnuts were not called for, and Brown Lize never met his sight again. How he recovered the missing wallet, how found the way to Cobleskill and met the wrath of an irate parent is no part of our story.

The death of Lucretia Lorne removed from the heiress of Riverside one overshadowing cloud. Her fertile wit it was that conceived the idea of at once reclaiming Zulette by legal measures and obtaining possession of Charity Green by unlawful ones. When, therefore, tidings of the decease of the harlot reached the evil men once baffled by the boldness and sagacity of Wallingford, all the motives of reward which had urged them came to an end. Not so with the daring confederates from abroad.

Handy Ben sat that night in a snug inner room, at a thieves' crib, and narrated the discovery. Instituting immediate inquiries the trio became aware that the object of their search was residing with a worthy family, of Dutch descent, in the rural neighborhood which we have called Wiltsevleet. Unappalled by fire and blood, by midnight

murder and its consequences, and still intent upon the full fruition of the scheme, they now reviewed the enterprise from its beginning. First concerting measures by which to replenish their exchequer, impoverished by the expenses incurred in obtaining release on bail from Charleston prison, it was their determination, as soon after as possible, to spirit the heiress away. Slightly modifying the previous plan, since the death of the Rector of Richmanstown, it was now decided that the young lady should be concealed in a border village of the Canadas, until, by the consummation of a forced marriage with one of their number, the destiny of the victim should be forever united with their own.



CHAPTER XLIV.

NIAGARA AND THE DEATH PLUNGE.

The river of events becomes most terrible as we are borne along, and not alone in figure, but in fact. It is now more than an hour past midnight, and in the east a faint and spectral lustre of the waning moon might be mistaken for the harbinger of coming day. Above us,—for we are rocking in a frail egg shell of a skiff upon the dark whirlpool below the falls of Niagara,—above us foams and plunges the cataract.

Closely buttoned in shaggy great-coats, now shivering as puffs of spray coldly dash against their faces, now muttering oaths as the wherry narrowly escapes being stove or upset by driving ice-masses, we encounter three men of blood and crime, still bent on the enterprise which has already caused the death of the Rector of Richmans-town and enwrap the house of Lucretia Lorne in flames.

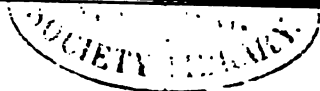
Goat Island is veiled in a white mist, which slowly divides as the wind freshens, revealing the forest upon it, as yet unclad with the foliage of spring, except where here and there bends a maple, whose reddened blossoms begin to be succeeded by a faint, almost imperceptible green. Yet swollen buds, on all the branches, seem waiting but a touch and a breath to unfold their greenery. The night is balmy. Were it not for the mighty voice which the waters lift to heaven, we might hear the wild geese, those early risers and far, swift travelers, cleaving the air with a shrill “honk, honk,” mingled with the beating of resounding wings.

The wherry occupied by the confederates and urged on with sinewy arms, is turned toward the American shore. Handy Ben is the first whose words we overhear: "What devil's chase is this that we are on now? I do not believe that the girl came over this way, unless she is a witch."

"There she is now," exclaims the one with sharp eye and heart hardened beyond remorse.

"Where?" breaks in the murderer Tofton; "that is not her." The three were now peering at a slender Indian canoe, propelled apparently by a frail, slight form, clothed in spectral white, rocking in the agitated waters beneath the American Fall. It was indeed a painful sight to any eyes except those whom gracious tears of sympathy had lost all power to bedew.

The maiden embarked alone, in fog and darkness and flying mist, on these fearful waters, is indeed Charity Green. The three ruffians, whom we last observed concocting measures to reconstruct their broken plan, proved successful in a final effort. Upon a pleasant afternoon in the beginning of May the maiden had wandered a short distance from the domicil which had been her place of retreat during the Winter. Beguiled by the love of nature, intent on adding wild flower after wild flower to the bouquet in her hand, and venturing for this purpose into the borders of a secluded woodland, the confederates were once more successful in bearing away their helpless prize. Two main lines of railway, at this point not many miles apart, one inland and the other on the banks of the Hudson, both terminate in the great metropolis of the Western world. Upon the first of these lines of travel, waiting for this purpose till the shades of night came on, the trio were so fortunate as to arrive in New York, and, in pursuance of the course agreed upon, instantly set out for the Canadas by a railway which, passing through the Southern tier of counties, diverges to the North and leaves the State at the Sus-



pension Bridge, below the Falls of Niagara. Arriving at the end of the day's journey, several hours after night had set in, at the depot in the Queen's dominions, where they had hoped to find a conveyance waiting by which to reach the hiding-place, where all things were in readiness for the forced marriage by which they expected to secure the fortune of the heiress, the train, as often is the case, had already left for its destination. Applying in haste at an inferior lodging-house, already overfilled with travelers, disappointed, like themselves, a small chamber was procured for the captive, till day-break should bring the hour for the departure of the next train, the ruffians taking turns to watch, feigning sleep, in the passage before the entrance to the apartment.

About one o'clock, the house being still, Chelmsford, motioning to the accomplices to see that none were by, proceeded with burglar's skill to open the door, venturing with guilty eye and stealthy foot into the sufferer's place of seclusion.

The captive had moaned in the cars, during the day, from time to time, and muttered incoherent words. Disguised, the better to elude search, as a party of emigrants, they had escaped notice from the conductor. Over-wearied with the fatigues of the rapid journey, their prisoner was helpless and unconscious at its close. Arriving at the junction, in the confusion and disappointment of the hour, amidst a thousand discords which attend the change of baggage, the calling of checks, the trampling of heavy feet, and the hurrying to and fro of travelers, each bent on being foremost to secure a night's lodging or some hasty food, the ruffians had borne their prize, carefully as if indeed some precious thing, to the apartment in the ale house. To the slatternly servant, who came, rubbing the sleepy eyes and dropping tallow from the flaring light, while shuffling along the corridor, one of the party had briefly whispered

that the young woman was subject to sudden faints and needed but a night's repose. What fear had they that one so utterly helpless could escape?

At midnight Chelmsford had looked into the chamber before, and the innocent one seemed fast asleep. An hour had passed since then. The candle had gone out, and the waning moon, in its last quarter, not yet risen. The humble room was in shadow. Not a sound disturbed the stillness; only the booming of the great cataract in the distance, which seemed less to move the floating air-currents than to jar the body of the atmosphere.

The burglar listened. Informed by the acute sense of hearing that there was no sound of respiration, however gentle, his first fear was "She is dead." Groping to the candle-stand, where matches had been deposited, the blue light broke out against the wall, and then a breath of air extinguished it. The white curtain rose and fluttered; the window, closed at twelve, was now open. Hastily grasping at a handful of the lucifers, and igniting them with a rapid nervous movement, they blazed up momentarily like a torch, but only to reveal an apartment vacant of its tenant. The over-garments which had been removed by the maid-servant were there; but the fugitive;—whither had she fled? They were upon the third flight. Gazing from the window, at a distance of twenty feet below, lay, apparently, a mass of brown earth against the building, but, in reality, a heap of loose tan, forming a winter embankment, a substance which yields softly to sudden pressure, and acts as a non-conductor of sound.

In brief, whispered words, the disappointed ruffian beckoning the accomplices to his side, pointed to the empty couch and muttered, "She opened the blind and sprang down there." Walking stealthily to avoid disturbing the inmates, the three made their way at once into the open

air, Chelmsford's suspicions proving correct, the spot where their captive had fallen being visible in faint starlight.

Ten minutes elapsed and the three, by the aid of a lantern from the depot, were endeavoring to trace her steps. A hackman, passing with an early freight for the morning train, accosted them, issuing into the open road, with "Hallo, Gents, what's broken loose?" Tofton answered, "We had a mad woman under our charge: she has escaped during the night, and we are after her." Jehu, cracking the whip and urging on the steeds, found time to reply, "Guess she has got a ducking by this time. I saw a woman just this side the falls, white as a ghost, chasing like wild-fire down the path to the landing."

Twenty minutes elapsed and the trio stood at the foot of the precipice below the cataract on the Canadian side, where, at the rude pier, a number of wherries, used during the day to convey passengers to and fro, secured by chain and padlock, were drawn up on the bank. Hastily selecting the one nearest to the water's edge, on discovering that their victim must have taken to the stream, and venturing out upon the tumbling, rolling rapids, after passing the horse-shoe fall and arriving at the smoother water below Goat Island, they were rewarded by the sight of the maiden, urging, with all the skill acquired by companionship with the Indians, a slight canoe, through the driving foam.

A few moments after two men stood, engaged in conversation on the piazza of the Cataract House on the American side at the village of the Falls. They are arrivals by the Central Railroad, which, passing through the interior of the great State of New York, sends off a branch for the accommodation of travelers to Niagara. The ebony countenance of one betrays an humble acquaintance whom we last observed in the homestead of the Van Twiggles. The other is Miles Wallingford. "Sambo," remarks the latter in a low but decided tone, "It is now two o'clock and I am

going to the Falls." "Golly Massa," replies the negro, "dat are a spookish place to go to dis time ob night ; better wait till mornin. Miss Charity am not dare sure." Nevertheless, murmuring that which may be a prayer, the retainer follows, and crossing the bridge over the rapids which leads to Goat Island, they are soon out of sight.

We left the abductors urging their wherry in pursuit of the flying maiden below the cataract. It is now two.—Unable to overtake the canoe they have beheld it whirled around a jetting rock, while, lightly as if a floating cloud of vapor, springing from it, the maiden is now, with all that wonderful sureness of hand and foot displayed by the somnambulist, venturing upon a pathway never trodden by man, where slimy rocks, dripping and moss-covered, worn by the waves of ages, seem to present an impassable barrier. Now clutching at a horn of the sharp lime-stone; now clinging to some fantastic root that coils and dives wherever a crevice gives passage to its fibers, then creeps into the open air and feeds its last filaments upon the dropping water from above; now at a dead stand as some jutting shelf impedes; then poised in mid air where even the wild goat might hardly find a stepping place; then, still up to where the vision takes in the dreadfulness and horror of the journey; then swinging above the overhanging precipice, suspended from the roots of a great pine; then standing at the extreme verge of the plateau, still, white and shadowy as if some disembodied spirit, the baffled pursuers, holding their breath to watch that perilous ascent, beheld it finished.

Making their own way to the stair case, which, at a point a little above, leads to the grove below the falls on the American side, and beating heavily at its closed gate, they rouse the sleepy occupant of the building, who at last opens, hardly mollified by double fare, and complaining of the disturbance at that unseasonable hour.

Still two hundred feet above, the innocent maiden pauses

to listen while the outlaws enter below ;—then harkens for a moment, while a sound of heavy trampling echoes from the rickety wood wook ;—then darts like an arrow over velvet sward ;—then pauses at the verge of the swift water rushing over the American falls ;—then seems to hear the pursuers emerging from the stair-case and flies before them like a mist ;—then lingers midway upon the narrow bridge that spans the rapids between the American shore and Goat Island, gazing at the stars that seem to twinkle from a thousand eddies ;—then bounds on as those hateful voices once more strike the ear ;—then pauses awhile to inhale the fragrance of fresh grass and budding leaves ;—then darts, straight onward as the bee goes, through wild wood paths ;—then stands where the great view of the Horse Shoe fall breaks upon the sight ;—then rests where the full channel gathers itself up for the final leap ;—lithe, swift and airy as some palpable embodiment of silence and fleet motion and beamy mist.

“How dreadful,” said one of old, after shining visions of the midnight, “how dreadful is this place ; it is none other than the house of God and the very gate of Heaven.” The maiden lingers irresolute. At the right is a pathway leading to the point where Goat Island terminates at a narrow ledge, while the Centre Fall, leaping madly down, wears away the sharp lime-stone year after year. But, before, a little foot-bridge, precarious and now partially broken by some accident of the winter, conducts the traveler to a tower built as if in defiance of death, where a few worn boulders lie at the very verge of the Horse Shoe. Charity is venturing upon the bending, slippery planks. A sound disturbs her as of a foot upon some crackling twig. She turns, stands an instant as if listening, and, taking the right hand path proceeds toward the lower extremity of the Island. Behind, now stealing on tip toe, Chelmsford emerges from the coppice, Handy Ben having fallen back at the voice of

the foremost burglar, "Let me lead the way. Don't frighten her or she'll go over the falls; then all our luck's up." Tof-ton, the weakest of the party, lags a little behind.

At this point there is a carriage road to the lower part of the island, bounded on either hand by the shrubbery and by the rapid water above the Centre Fall. The object of their search was moving slowly over it, the pursuers following in the shadow.

The maiden is now at its end, where a path, dangerous and insecure, and winding through a few stunted shrubs, terminates at a smooth ledge bounding the cataract. The pursuers watch and whisper and point with eager hand. The object of their search is before them, now looking around, then springing from shelf to shelf in the pathway, careless of danger as the brooklet, when, with a merry laugh, it loiters through the dingle, and leaps in airy motion over the rapids of the glen.

Unconscious apparently of peril as the young grasses at her feet or the twisted shrubs of birch or cedar by her side, the somnambulist stands at last upon the worn and narrow rock, and there, while the white mist parts again, looks forth like some pure angel, gazing from the overhanging headlands of immortality, to behold Time's great waters thundering down the gulfs where bad men wail and weep.

The fragrant sprays, heavy with bursting leaf, are trembling, as the south wind, harbinger of morn that is to come, moves upon them with a faint and unembodied voice. Holding on, each by some gnarled branch, near enough to hear every accent of the voice, anxiously waiting for the dreamer to clamber up the path again that they may pinion the frail form in strong arms, and bear her struggling to the coming doom, yet moving not, and speaking not, and crouching beneath the straggling wood, the ruffians pause impatient.

The somnambulist now stands and dallies with the

foot, where the flat rock slightly curves, glistening perpetually from the reflection of the curving wave. Beyond the Centre Fall, white and airy; still beyond the mightier Horse Shoe, and between the dark tower, now hidden as the mist rises, now visible as it parts, shine wan and fearful as the waning moon climbs up the east and the stars drift westward from her face. Now and then a tree trunk, now and then a mass of solid, floating ice from the lakes, rises upon the chasm's verge, balances for a moment, as if recoiling from the plunge, and breaks to fragments in the descent. A little violet shows its tender bud, peering out beneath the maiden's eye where a clump of moss was gathered just over the edge of the precipice. A drop of dew, formed from suddenly condensed spray, twinkles and shines upon the flower's petal. Kneeling, the maiden inclines as if to gaze, and reaches down to pluck this early blossom. Her cheek is laid on the wet stone. Now the pale face is moved forward. The violet seems holding up the liquid gem that trembles in its chalice, breathing out its perfume as an offering, upon that dreadful altar, to the Great Spirit of the deeps. Still the shadowy form moves, till those who look behold what seem the skeleton fingers of the mist come out to clutch the daring hand. Beneath the crash and boom of the waters reverberate, as if they were sounds of some fierce naval conflict, where, veiled in smoke and locked yard-arm and yard-arm, huge battle ships were quivering from keel to keelson to feel the death-driven balls tearing through ribs of oak. The guilty trio move farther on, crouching almost at the precipice.

Unconscious of their proximity, the slender hand is withdrawn, holding the tiny blossom. The maiden rises now. What awful words are these? What sweet and solemn voice is this which utters them?

"The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer. He heard my voice out of His temple; then the earth shook and trem-

bled. He bowed the Heavens also, and came down and darkness was under his feet. He made darkness His secret place; His pavilion round about Him was dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.

Then the channels of waters were seen and the foundations of the world were discovered. Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water spouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Come and see the works of God: He turned the sea into dry land. They went through the flood. There did we rejoice in Him. The waters saw thee, oh! God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid; the depths also were troubled. And I saw a great, white throne and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and the sea gave up the dead."

Communing thus as with the Invisible, in trances of sacred wonder, the maiden beheld, as if the deep indeed were giving up its tenants. The morning wind, lifting the mist and driving it before its viewless breath, caused the congregated vapors, seen by the eye of poet or dreamer, to move in masses of wraith-like, spectral shapes.

The watchers drew nearer. Was there some silent horror in the scene, some boundless fascination? They crouch at last at a point a little below, upon the verge of the smooth, worn mass.

With eyes uplifted, with hands crossed upon the bosom, murmuring, as it seemed, inarticulate prayer-words, the dreamer is kneeling now.

With a quick motion, Handy Ben reaches out. As the ruffian touches the folds of the trailing dress an electric shock, sudden as that which moves the nerves of the sensitive plant, disturbs that statue-like serenity, and, shrieking, with a loud cry, the worshiper leaps up, half suspended over the abyss.

Has indeed the spirit of the scene transfused her being with its subtle essence? The clear, dilated eye-balls, wide and fixed, the radiant form quivering like that of the oracle

when moved by the inspiring power, awe two of the confederates.

The third, with a silent imprecation and a low whisper, "No time to lose," lifts the athletic, wiry body to its full height, stands firmly on the insecure foundation, then, leaning forward essays to wind the arm around the dreamer, seeks to grasp the slender hand, now raised and pointing, as if in silent colloquy with some distant star.

"Oh! the waters, the terrible waters." The man of iron will and conscience grown hard and desperate,—he cowers as the vast spectacle meets the sight. A moment,—a sharp, shrill scream,—the trance is broken,—the sibyl is but the trembling and helpless girl.

Mysterious are the ways of Providence. Settling from its firm hold of ages, divided from the body of the isle by a crevice till now imperceptible, while even the abductor was reaching at the pointing, beckoning hand, the great ledge slowly parted. Too intent upon the object of his pursuit to feel the first faint motion,—swaying for a moment to and fro with arms extended to their utmost,—with all the eagerness of pursuit mingled with the sudden recoil of horror in the frenzied countenance,—then plunging headlong,—then shooting like the heavy stone that thunders down before as if to point the way,—then lost in surging foam, or pierced on splintered ice, or torn by sharp, jutting rock-masses, Joseph Chelmsford forever disappeared from mortal sight.

Two hands had been reached out toward the unconscious girl, one for the ruin the other for the rescue. Following on, as if moved by that invisible Power which guides, in ways unknown to human sight, the steps of those who seek to do His holy bidding, Miles Wallingford, still attended by the negro, and emerging from the thicket into the open space immediately above the Middle Fall, had taken in with one quick glance the meaning of the specta-

cle; the somnambulist in communion with all that silent wonder and glory and mystery, and the crouching trio waiting for their prey, two kneeling at the lower portion of the rock, while their more daring leader, gathering breath, leaned forward to hurl back the unconscious one from the peril of the waters to that more terrific danger which is born of the fierce passions of bloody men.

With ears deafened by the heavy reverberations, with eyes intent only on the object of their search, the ruffians were unconscious that they were watched as well as watchers. When, therefore, without premonition, the fissure burst, the ledge gave way and their leader toppled down, shrinking within themselves, covering the eyes with shaking, palsied hands, the two that survived were unable for a moment to perceive that the somnambulist had escaped the seemingly inevitable doom. Secured by a frail hold upon a stunted cedar that overhung the precipice, concentrating every energy into one agonised strain for life, and that which Love holds dearer, the life of the beloved, the swift rescuer had grasped the trembling, helpless girl, who now lay folded upon his bosom, safe from danger. Wallingford had swung the maiden upward and from the cliff at the very moment in which the heavy form of Chelmsford was tottering to the plunge below.

Tofton was the first to recover mind, sense and energy. With a shout to Handy Ben, "We are betrayed," the hand red with two murders drew the quick weapon upon the young man in the path above, panting still with the almost preternatural effort by which the dear girl's life who now clung to his breast had been preserved. Too late! For now, while yet the finger was upon the lock, while yet the eye glanced upward in the act of taking sight, while yet the swift oath was upon the lip, and the hot impulse of bloodshed spouting ruddy from the heart,—in an instant—without a solitary cry for mercy,—without the very memory of

prayer,—as if bound with some great mill-stone and so cast into the depths of the sea,—jostling side by side with the companion of deeds of crime before,—he who had turned Charity Green, the young child, into sleet and darkness on that first Christmas night, went down. The flying thunder echoed from cliff to cliff. Pine and birch and cedar trembled with a momentary fear. The dark rocks splintered in the descent. A bronzed face, still hollow from recent illness, grew slowly into its last look of blank horror, all mingled with fiendish rage. Then once more the floods lifted up their voice, and Niagara wailed unearthly misereres over the felon's end.

The guests and inmates of the great hotels on the American side of the cataract were startled that night, toward morning, by two distinct reports as of cannon. On the ensuing day it was discovered that a large part of the steep lime-stone ledge at the foot of Goat Island on the brink of the Centre Fall had disappeared.

CHAPTER XLV.

TWO MARRIAGES.

The nuptials of Lady Devereux and the gallant cavalier of the Priory were appointed for the first of June. The ceremony, which was to be strictly private and performed by the Rector of Riverside, was to occur in the chapel of the Hall. The few invited guests were all present, embracing a score of personal friends of the bride and groom. Slight showers had fallen before sunrise and the day was one of moist, delicious fragrance and coolness. In the blue drawing-room Squire Brompton sat conversing with the Rector when a servant entered bearing a stranger's card. Rising immediately, with a brief apology to the Divine, the bridegroom expectant left the apartment.

A coach meanwhile had driven to the principal entrance, where, although the armorial bearings of its ancient possessors had been replaced by others, the grand legend "Right makes Might" could still be traced deep cut in aged stone. Within the carriage sat a young man attired in plain black, by his side, veiled, a slender maiden. The stately gentleman, motioning away the attendants beyond ear-shot, stood before the open door of the vehicle and met the pair descending from it. It was thus that Miles Wallingford re-entered the family mansion of his ancestors, bearing through peril and danger the child of the widowed mother to the yearning heart and longing arms.

Conducted into a retiring room, the youthful maiden, now disembarassed of traveling attire, standing in the soft

and shadowed light, beheld an inner door open. It was no mother who approached, yet one bearing all a mother's heart and claiming all a mother's love;—Marian Deschamps.

The lost heiress gazed. Vanished the June day, vanished in some divine radiance. The grateful heart never forgets. The doer of a deed of kindness may indeed lose every recollection, but the worthy recipient cherishes the act in memory forever. Faded away the mansion at Riverside; faded away the fresh incidents of the ocean passage; faded away the seven years of trial and vicissitude.

The graceful beholder, simply clad, yet perfect as the pearl among gems or the jasmine among flowers, gazed through eyes, now kindling with all the woman's boundless emotion, then shadowed with the neglected foundling's reminiscences of want and woe. The lovely frame shivered from head to foot. The silent, wondering bridal guest, herself arrayed as if to wear the Hymeneal crown, felt the warm love-tide flooding from the heart, beheld her winter treasure. Then, with a long and silent kiss and straining of heart to heart, and murmured words of mingled welcome and prayer, the recognition, the reunion, was complete.

Steps were heard at the drawing-room door; mysterious whispering; a pleading voice, "I must enter;" a murmur, "Wait a moment, love."

Marian divined the two; divined the mother and the groom. Hastily baring the dimpled arm, pressing a sweet kiss the while upon the tiny letter traced on the snowy surface; and then, with an apology not needed, partially opening the silk bodice, heaving now as if the heart of some fawn throbbed within it, till its loosened wealth dimly revealed that crimsoned heart, set there as if by Heaven's own foreknowing hand; and hushing still the trembling one, who now sat wondering yet full of quiet joy, sure that all was well, the dear girl, hearing again the whispered

words, "I must enter; detain me no longer, Hugh," arose and gave the signal for admittance. The white robes, the flowing vail, the orange blossoms and the diamonds, in which Lady Devereux had stood before the altar, no less than the countenance, flushed with the excitement of the ceremony, and the eyes bathed in recent tears, betrayed the new-made bride.

Charity Green rose, leaning on the supporting arm of Marian Deschamps. Stately as an empress, the beautiful woman advanced. The mother and the daughter met. An hour later and the two sat clasped in each other's arms, neither speaking, heart-full, as if the perfect rose would draw the bud back into its veins once more; while the thrilling, vibrating voice could only murmur, "My child, my child!"

The guests were still assembled at the breakfast table, when Dr. Hartwell, who had been absent for a few moments, returned to his place. It was to arise and say: "Providence blesses us to-day. The hour which has witnessed the ceremony by which the Lady of Riverside becomes mistress of the Priory, is crowned by the return of Countess Rosa to the home of her fathers. Let us thank God." The aged lips moved in prayer, to which every heart responded with a sincere "amen."

Two gentlemen met meanwhile in the library, so alike in features and gesture, in symmetry of limb and in noble bearing, that a stranger would have pronounced them father and son; yet neither had beheld each other's face before. Announced simply as Mr Miles Wallingford, Riverside, America, the youthful stranger, gazing on the man of stately middle age, could with difficulty persuade himself that this was not his own heroic ancestor, the good Knight of the Commonwealth, returned to earth in ripened prime of manhood.

The young man briefly spoke, "I perceive sir, that this

is an intrusion upon festivities. I trust that I have brought a sufficient apology. The young lady whom I have had the honor to escort from America is one, as I have learned, for whom the lady of Riverside has sought for a number of years. My own task is ended when I learn that she is recognised."

"My task is not ended, I assure you, sir," was the reply. "Permit me to ask a question which may seem intrusive. Are you aware from what branch of the Wallingfords you claim descent?"

The young gentleman answered, "I am the last representative and only surviving issue in the direct line of Sir Miles Wallingford, once Major General in the army of the Parliament and Privy Counsellor of the Commonwealth."

"Favor me," was the response, "by one more answer equally to the purpose. Do you retain such family records as might suffice to establish this?"

The stranger colored while a gleam of lightning shot from the bright eye. Then followed the answer. "The remains of the estate of Riverside, America, which I inherit from a deceased father, were his by succession from my grandparent, a confidential friend and aid of the commander in-chief of the armies of the Revolution. To him the same estate devolved, through his parent, no less illustrious, from Sir Miles, whose remains are interred in the family vaults and whose last will and testament is at your service."

Again the courtly questioner resumed, "I was correct, my dear sir, in stating that my task was but begun. United within the last hour to the Dowager Lady Devereux, mother of the charming girl whose return crowns the day's festivities, it becomes my duty and I may add my pleasure, as the representative of the ancient family of the Wallingfords by the female line, to bid my cousin Miles welcome and thrice welcome."

The guest colored, yet not a whit less knightly was the

declaration, "You welcome, sir, a plain man, who esteems it no less a duty than an honored privilege to labor with the pen. I am an editor; all that remains of our estate being the old mansion on the Hudson."

Again Hugh Brompton grasped the young man's hand. "Then are we doubly allied. Never was a true Wallingford unable to joust in the field of letters. For estate, I account myself your debtor in the sum of five thousand pounds a year, being, by the terms of an ancient instrument, holder in trust, as the head of the Brompton family, of the hundred of Marshlands an inalienable possession of the Wallingfords. From that old porch, cousin, two hundred years since, weeping retainers beheld the Wallingfords' exile. The life of Sir Miles was forfeited at the Restoration. There, mounted on his faithful steed, the brave knight bade farewell to Riverside. To-day an ancient distich, current here for generations, among old family retainers, becomes verified."

"When Richmanstown has crossed the fen
Young Wallingford comes home again."

We parted, in a preceding chapter, with the venerable Rector of Riverside, departing from the Priory for the purpose of separating for a time two faithful lovers. The wedding day had been appointed, and Charles and Marian were together superintending an alteration in the chapel, where additional pew room was necessary for the constantly increasing band of worshipers. The two followed their kind friend into the vestry, and there he broke to them the purport of the errand. It was hard; the first shock proved very painful; but, before the interview was at an end, it was determined that Bloomfield should proceed to Charleston without delay.

On arriving at his place of destination it was to find blackened walls and the ruins of an old garden in place of the splendid mansion of Lucretia Lorne. Her solicitor, a

gentleman of character and standing at the bar, on learning the purport of the young man's mission, made known such particulars of the transactions connected with the flight of the heiress as were at his command, informing him also that, on the night of the fourteenth of February, the house had been burned; the fire originating in the apartments occupied by the lady, who perished in the flames. Disposed to be communicative on discovering the high character of the visitant, the Attorney whispered that an English gentleman, a traveler, whose effects were still in charge of the landlord of the Charleston Hotel, had been the last person in her company, and was supposed to have perished also; that, for the purpose of avoiding scandal, no public mention had been made, but that reasons existed for supposing that the stranger had been a clergyman.

No claimants appearing for the absent Mr. Ormsby's luggage, on removing it to a place of security and opening the escritoir for the purpose of ascertaining the traveler's probable place of residence, letters were found addressed to the Hon. and Rev. Alphonso Bushwig, Richmanstown, England. On receiving an intimation that the Rev. Mr. Bloomfield was from the same place, the gentleman having charge of the effects entrusted them to the youthful Divine for the purpose of their return to the heirs or next of kin.

Resisting the hospitable invitations of friends in that southern city, where, on the Sabbath the youthful servant of the temple had preached with eminent acceptance, and furnished with a letter from the attorney to Miles Wallingford, Esq., Riverside, New York, as a gentleman who had interested himself in the manumission of the slave Zulette and who probably was aware of the present residence of the young lady whom her daring act had released from custody, the young clergyman arrived at Wiltsevleet to learn, from the lips of the kind-hearted and frank Katrina, that her friend had been once more spirited away and recovered

by the same faithful protector, and that the party had sailed from New York for England by the steamer of the preceding Saturday. Losing therefore no time in the New World, after a rapid passage, the middle of June beheld the heir of Wingate Hall once more in the drawing-room of the mansion on the Green.

The effects of the deceased Rector of Richmanstown, claimed at once by the guardians of Lady Rosa Devereux, Dr. Bushwig leaving no nearer relatives, threw needful light on more than one mystery. Sergeant Wildfire, on being made acquainted with the decease of his client, and also with the particulars of the plot, now entirely thwarted by the hand of Divine Providence, declared that were the guilty party living he would throw up the briefs. At the June assizes, the case of "Bushwig versus the Executors" being appointed for rehearing, no trial was held, the plaintiff having deceased. The forged will, which Attorney Bluefil, acting under instructions, now endeavored to establish in Doctors' Commons, was set aside, the Attorney absconding on the discovery that the Rector of Richmanstown was dead, and that his private papers had fallen into the hands of the contestants. Thus the stupendous conspiracy, built up at such cost of suffering and blood, was resolved to nothingness.

The nuptials of Marian Deschamps were appointed for the first of July, Rosa's birthday. The ceremonies took place in the chapel erected by the conjoint bestowment of the two. At an early hour the bells of St. Winifred's pealed a wedding chime. Few were present in the dimly-lighted chancel, where Dr. Hartwell officiated. Squire Brompton gave away the bride, and Miles Wallingford of Marshland and the youthful Countess of Riverside, as groomsmen and bride's-maid, assisted in the sacred rites. Afterward the neighboring mansion was the scene of such festivity as seldom falls to the lot of old or young, rich or

poor, to witness. A marriage feast was provided for all the humble communicants of the parish, and more than a hundred, reclaimed from despairing doubts of God and man, and reckless and dissipated living, to a true faith and a righteous life, made merry; served by the newly-wedded pair and their attendants.

In another apartment, all clad in white, and wearing bride favors, twenty-four tearful and smiling little lasses kept holiday. They had learned already to love, as a priest at the Lord's altar, the gentleman whom the young mother in God now told them was her husband, and their friend and protector.

"When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed: for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

At the earnest desire of Rosa, the bridal pair had consented that the first part of the honeymoon should be passed in the delightful seclusion of Riverside. Hugh Brompton the younger and his Mary, the newly welcomed Countess and Miles accompanying them. While the sunset goldens the hill-tops, reader, let us rest awhile.

The room before us opens toward the west. Broad valleys, dimly seen through interposing foliage, are made green by the flowings of a tranquil water-course. Beyond, the purple uplands melt away till one high peak serves as the boundary, and there the setting luminary seems kneeling while the glorious clouds arise like incense from the altar of his evening devotions.

The suite of rooms of which the principal commands this charming landscape are in the occupancy of the bride. She is alone. Noiselessly a door of the apartment opens. The bridegroom stands for a moment gazing on the beautiful one. The sun has now gone down, but still each floating cloud is bathed in more than earthly brightness. The starry lotus blossoms of Marian's pure eyes are dewy with the

light of happy thought. The lover steals in silence to her side, too glad to speak, and seeks the little hand, that now, encircled by the plain gold ring, withdraws itself no more. "Marian, dear Marian," whispers Charles, "the calm of a little child seems resting on me: I am unspeakably blest. My sweet wife, this indeed is more than a recompense for years. I seem to have floated from the swelling sea into some delicious haven."

The fair girl thrilled to hear the name of wife; felt the maiden shyness for a moment. A look at the pure face of the young husband caused the bright eyes to brim over. The graceful head sought its shelter on the manly breast and the murmured words came, "Blessing, I too am happy, unspeakably happy. All is peace within, great peace. It rests me thus. I was tired, Charlie. Your little wife has borne a heavy burden. It is so sweet to share it,—so sweet."

The young moon shone above the fruit-tree tops. The visionary splendor of the west was melting into the clear blue, as the response came from the bridegroom, "I felt, Love, this morning at the altar, that our joy was to be beyond all words. I know not how to describe that which I feel. My heart seems deeper, fuller, even painful from excess of affection, as if its life's life were come. The mind grows still and infantile. Tell me, what is marriage? tell me what is love? For this which I experience is a mystery."

With half-closed eyes, the bride leaned upon that quiet breast and murmured a reply: "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine. Dear husband, we can only understand the mystery of marriage as we rightly comprehend God's Word. The apostle compares it to the union of our dear Lord with His faithful followers. I so receive it. One heart, one mind, interknit by a Divine power, the souls give themselves to each other. Flesh and blood cannot comprehend it, for it is spiritually discerned. Your manly

strength energizes my feeble will, and now I am strong. The love for which you have so earnestly craved,—I know not how,—the heart drinks it as the earth absorbs the copious shower. Each finds its deficient element. My confession will seem singular. This morning I longed above all things in the world for repose, utter repose; and, really, it seemed that another day of labor would prostrate the system. Now, while your life gives strength to mine, a new state dawns upon me. I am twofold myself, and fitted for a double labor. Can it be, dearest, that, in giving ourselves to each other, our dear Lord gives a double portion of His Spirit. Oh, this bliss is unutterable! I seem dissolving in such tender love;—my treasure!" The fond voice died away.

The tender twilight came. The two arose, cheerful voices summoning them to join the bridal party in the drawing-room below.

CHAPTER XLVI.

ASK AND YE SHALL RECEIVE.

The lights were lit in the drawing-room at the Priory. The Summer evening, mild and balmy, filled the air with a delicious fragrance. A lady whose superb beauty the years seems to take delight in crowning with more perfect charm, reclines within an easy chair. Opposite a gentleman sits, his countenance now in the shadow, but the noble, classic head is that of Hugh Brompton the elder. A rich voice, accompanied by the harp, floats from the neighboring apartment, and, at its close, one of the listeners, in a deep, manly tone, remarks, "Marie, that little song which our dear Rosa sings with such feeling provokes a half regret."

The liquid, dreamy eyes are lifted to the husband's face in mute inquiry, as he continues: "This boy and girl of ours have before them a future which I fear. It is now almost three years since you gave me this precious hand, and now we hardly know which is dearest to us, the youth or maiden. I cannot divine the heart of either. At first their relation seemed entirely fraternal; now Miles comes but seldom to the Priory. I had hoped that they might love each other, and noticed, at first, that which seemed a growing fondness. It is the dear girl's honey-time,—her tender May: the young violets are budding in her heart. But she avoids her cousin and seeks every occasion to withdraw from the family circle when he is present. This afternoon I found him in the picture gallery, with compressed lip and folded arms, gazing at the old portraits. Venturing

the remark, 'You look grave, my boy; let me claim a father's privilege;'" the young man heaved a sigh and answered, 'It is the third scene of the last act to-morrow. Suffer me till then to seem ungrateful. Indeed I share a secret which is not mine.' Can our dear girl have placed her affections elsewhere?"

The lovely matron pressed the hand that held her own and replied, "Nay, Hugh, thou canst not read that heart. Sometimes Rosa is transparent to my fancy as this diamond. Then her soul is laid open. I read in it volumes of boundless good will and sweet affection. The dove nestles in the breast that warmed it into life. But there are other times when a something within, which I cannot fathom, startles me. Her thoughts are fervent, mystical, impassioned. It is as if I sat and listened at the shrine of an oracle. The girl does not comprehend herself. I ask, Can this be Rosa? It is the person of Rosa, but the tones are like the voice of Wallingford.

"She cherishes no thought, so far as I know, that he is her suitor, nor do I imagine that his lips have ever touched her cheek. No pledge or promise of any kind exists between them; for this I have her own word. To-morrow is the child's eighteenth birthday. How time has fled!"

Clothed in airy muslin robes, the entrance of the young lady of Riverside prevented further conversation. The mother gazed upon the daughter as if to read the soul, then dropped the remark, "Have you seen Miles this evening, my dear?" "Not since dinner, mamma. It seems as if he were oppressed with some weight of care; absent and preoccupied."

Without, upon the moonlit balcony, pacing to and fro, with head bared to the night dews, the young man held communion with himself. Let us listen if that silent thought will shape itself in words. "Deep love is awful. It comes first like some poor starveling and craves shelter. Opening

the heart we give it household room. This is its first stage.

"We nurse the little play-fellow, and dandle it upon the knees, and call it pet names, and smile to feel its first caressings in the breast. This is its second stage.

"Soon it grows to be a friend and companion in all our rambles. It says, 'Go where you will, but let me keep company.' It shakes out troops of echoes from the flowers when we take the morning walk, and sits quietly beside the study table on the return, with airy winglets moving to and fro, till every faded folio becomes an illuminated volume, whose very letter-press seems wrought in arabesques of gems and flowers. Ah! then, ah! then, it takes the shape of the enchantress, and hovers, an impalpable dream-creature, crowned and radiant, above the pillow, and, so gradually that we are unaware, draws a charmed circle which, without its leave, we cannot overpass. This is its fourth stage. We hunger and thirst when absent to behold that blessed face, that sacred form, to drink in the life-giving element that seems to surround her presence. Love becomes her ministrant, her messenger, and whispers, in dark hours, of where she is, and what are her waking thoughts, and what the bright imaginations that troop around her vestal couch. Love pictures her in prayer, kneeling while faint starlight, streaming through painted glass, reveals a lovely apparition haloed with miraculous bloom, while the angels come and go upon the golden ladder of devotion. Love pictures her communing with Nature, while the little flowers rejoice because the light feet press their petals, and the branches by the wood-path are glad and laugh at the stray touch of the floating robes. Love whispers, 'Would'st thou be a bird, to light unchecked upon the gloved hand and trill thy heart away in gushes of song?' Love whispers, 'Would'st thou be the zephyr, all unrebuked to fan the crimsoned cheek, to dally with the

waving curls?' Love pictures her visiting the lowly, and stopping to greet humble delvers at their toil, entering the cottages of the poor, relieving the necessities of the destitute, and every where conferring kindness with that gracious, humble air which says, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' Love pictures her at festivals, the cynosure of every eye. What troops of gallants wait, what fascination draws the noble and the gay to hang upon her smile. Love pictures her,—Ah! stop there, Love!—with perhaps a rival breathing honeyed vows, venturing to clasp the hand that is to us a sacred talisman of light and joy. Is our manhood leaving us? We cannot bear the thought, and no! we will not believe it, though she did smile upon that rival. Love whispers, 'Can'st thou live without her?' We gather courage and reply, 'Yes, if it is God's will.' So dungeon prisoners have lived for years without sunlight. So exiles have endured life in arctic solitudes, where winter rules the dreary year. We learn, then, that the woman is the better and the inner part of the man; a finer essence, enriching his more earthly elements with preternatural feeling, thought, courage and devotion. But the mystery, woman's nature, the soul of one we love,—it is before us an unknown world. Is it to be our world? Then are we rich beyond the Indies. Are we to see it given to another? Then are we poor beyond the tattered garment and the crust of bread. Oh! the yearning of the man for the woman, the yearning to be complete in another life, which shall give its very essence to satisfy thought, feeling, imagination, fancy, to become a shield against temptation, a solace in suffering, a glorious leader to sovereign heights, where the God-man whom woman worships dwells! If it is cherished vainly, if Deceit spins this mirage, if cold Calculation leads us on for ends of worldly greed,—better die. When hopes like this are winter-killed they seldom spring a second time. Yet

Love, in its fifth stage, brings us to the verge of the June roses, or the December frosts.

"To-morrow I shall know if Love has its sixth stage. Oh! the slow months that seem years, the days of waiting with sealed lips. Rosa shuns me, trembles if I address her, seeks every occasion to absent herself from the Priory during my brief visits, all too brief. But they do not suspect my secret."

A friendly hand upon the shoulder arrests the silent soliloquy, and, bidding the heart be still, Miles Wallingford turns. It is the lady mother. Is she bent on divining that heart's secret. The words are soft and musical. The splendid figure, the noble head of the young man seem to belong, in this dim moonlight, to some statue. Not even woman's wit can read that face. This youth too has the double nature, the soul that lives in its own ideal realm, the mind prompt and ready for the actual duties of the hour.

"Come, dear Miles," whispers the lady, "my wayward Rosa has been wounding your feelings again. Hugh and myself cannot understand her contradictions. She flies your presence, without a cause I am sure; leaves the room at your entrance; dislikes to hear your name. "What is this sad secret? Call me mother, dear Miles." The caressing hand rested on the young man's arm. She continues, "This estrangement is very melancholy. There must be some mystery connected with it, yet I am confident that you are not to blame. Tell me Miles." It was now for the young man to speak. The voice was suppressed, deep, painful. "You are too kind to trouble yourself. It is all well. There is no accounting for tastes. Some of your flowers are so opposite in quality that they cannot thrive in the same part of the conservatory with others; their tendrils all incline from each other. A momentary association, during which God's hand made us useful to each other, caused perhaps a temporary friendship; but now; do you

not see it? We are, we must be, widely different in genius. I grieve that my presence occasions pain."

"Miles," is the answer, "talk from your heart or do not speak to me. Your words jar harshly, as if this were a part conned by rote. This difficulty between yourself and Rosa must be reconciled. Suffer me to mediate." The youth replies, "I would fain be wholly sincere, and if it is the mind that speaks, it is but to utter thought which seems to be true as reality itself. We are rapidly becoming strangers. It is well; very well."

"You will accompany us to Riverside to-morrow. It is Rosa's birthday. I hold you to the promise to be my knight. Forgive me for intruding upon secrets which perhaps you have reason to conceal: but you hurt me nevertheless." The fair speaker withdrew the hand.

Wallingford rejoined, "Lady Brompton, between your daughter and myself no relation exists other than that which might be maintained between any thrown casually by circumstance together. Let your kind heart be at rest.—To the young lady I am as I have been,—no more or less. Cause for this estrangement I have not given. Suffer it to be as it is. I have to-morrow an unfulfilled duty, which, when discharged, will enable me to place the cause of this painful discussion at a distance. Permit me to reconduct you within; the night is growing chill."

"We are fearfully and wonderfully made and that my soul knoweth right well:" this is a thought which every human spirit has pondered over. We are two fold. The mind of the flesh conceals within itself that majestic intelligence which is called, in Holy Writ, "the mind of the spirit." Charity entered the drawing-room as the two, leaving the balcony, stood within. It was now the hour for retirement. The lady mother folded the daughter to her heart, pressed a kiss upon the pure brow and murmured "Good night." Wallingford stood irresolute, the eyes

downcast. The lofty look that had confronted the mother lost itself in constrained timidity in the child's presence.—The youthful lady of Riverside, gliding to the door, paused, as if in the act of recollection. A reminiscence of the state of somnambulism seemed to gleam in the rich azure of the eyes, to flicker in the changeful radiance of the countenance. The slight finger sought the forehead as if pressing there upon some ivory key, vibrating a chord in the spirit's deepest consciousness. The young man was looking now; he could not choose but look; something in the gesture recalled the slender maiden poised upon the narrow shelf above the cataract of Niagara, drinking inspiration from the glory of the scene and whispering high and sacred words, that stir the soul from out God's word forever. One lonely nightingale sang without. The person, now ripened to luxuriant womanhood, shivered slightly as if with sudden chill, the voice dropped to a low tone. What troop of melodies had formed themselves in words? The state of somnambulism in that unexpected hour resumed its sway. Gliding, with a graceful courtesy, to where the young man stood wondering, it was to whisper "To-morrow Miles, to-morrow, recollect your promise." If this indeed was a return of the singular sleep-state of the Countess it was but momentary in its duration. The color faded, the preternatural brilliancy of the eyes disappeared, restraint and coldness resumed their sway. With a formal "Good evening, Mr. Wallingford" the young lady left the apartment.

The mother gazed in astonishment, finding no words, but, after the daughter's departure, once again the jeweled hand was laid upon the young man's arm, with "Miles, what is this secret?" The voice did not tremble that replied, "After I had been so fortunate as to rescue Rose on the first occasion, while recovering from the effects of the opiate which had been administered to her, a condition of ecstasy took the place of ordinary sleep. During its

continuance she described the circumstances connected with the events of the day, and gave directions by which the plot of the ruffians engaged in the final effort for her possession was thwarted, at that time exacting a promise that, on her eighteenth birthday, I should mention to her, alone, the full particulars of the interview. To this I referred but now when speaking of an unfulfilled duty. It is this which has brought me from my duties in London, whither I must return to my seat in Parliament with as little delay as possible." Here they separated, the young man in vain to seek repose, till morning dawned on eyes heavy and face pale with vigils.

Residing alternately at the Priory and Riverside Hall, Lady Devereux, now Lady Brompton, superintending the education of her daughter, had seen with delight the precocious, youthful genius, without loss of any original quality, becoming the elegant English woman, fitted in every respect to grace and dignify an eminent social position.

No less had the refined and cultivated gentleman, her husband, beheld the youthful heir of the Wallingfords growing by common consent into a recognised place as one eminently qualified to bear honors and dispense rule. The member of parliament for the borough of Richmanstown accepting office under the crown, Sir Miles,—the act of attainder having been reversed through family interests and the title renewed,—was proposed as his successor. The grave, manly youth, trained in Transatlantic politics, able with the pen and impassioned yet weighty on the hustings, elected with little opposition, found at once a field for the enrichment and activity of his many powers. Fitted by genius for the counsels of a monarchy, where rule descends from a stable centre of authority, rather than for the shifting circumstances of a republic, the new comer at once won fame and repute. Experienced statesmen remarked in him a rare faculty of silence. Irreproachable in morals and

exemplary in religion, making few professions yet evincing a supreme regard to the law of service, the temptations of London life had no injurious effect. The sudden transition from obscurity to distinction but brought into clear relief that singular humility by which he had been characterised in early life.

The relations between the youthful knight and the fair girl, indebted, in the Divine Providence, to his courage and wisdom for restoration to relatives and home, had been at first, as we have noticed, so far as the eye might discern, rather those which might exist between a brother and sister than such as unfold in the sweet intimacy of lovers. During the last few months, however, an estrangement, resulting from no visible cause, had disturbed this tranquil harmony. The two met with embarrassment, spoke but seldom and briefly, and it might have been inferred that coldness was becoming positive dislike.

Of a nature to love but once and to love forever, Miles grieved in silence. The gay and artless manners of Rosa soon underwent a change. Those who observed the maiden most attentively perceived an increasing desire for seclusion. Genius, apparently dormant since her return to the endearments of that sympathizing circle, revived. Fragments of sketches, evincing tragic and descriptive power of no common excellence, obtained almost furtively by the mother, were pronounced by her scholarly husband wonderful. Now, too, it was noticed that the young lady seldom visited except among the poor.

At ten o'clock, of the day ensuing that with which the chapter opens, Sir Miles, arriving at Riverside Hall, whither the heiress had been escorted at an early hour, sought the long expected interview.

Attired in simple white, the young lady awaited her friend, in the room most sacred by association of all the apartments of the mansion. The light, falling through a

cloud of softly tinted drapery, disclosed upon the oaken table newly engrossed papers. Motioning the guest to a seat, with a grave courtesy, the youthful Countess, now seemingly calm and self-possessed, with no tremor in the voice, addressed him, "My cousin, I have waited till the day fixed as that of my majority, for the purpose of consummating an act of justice, so far as is in my power. In this instrument you will find transferred, with all the legal forms, a portion of that wealth which my ancestors unjustly acquired, to the ruin of yours. The accumulations during the minority enable me but partially to relieve my conscience. Would that all might revert to the Wallingfords. Would that, leaving the Hall a portionless girl, I might have the satisfaction of knowing that the sin of two hundred years had been atoned. Do not think ill of me, cousin. Your indifference and aversion are doubtless just. The descendant of Lionel Devereux must appear little better than a robber, under the disguise of law, to the last survivor of a nobler name. I have schooled myself to bear this: but say, before we part, that I, the unwilling inheritress of this guilt, am forgiven."

The fogs from the water course made the morning chill, and the remains of a fire yet smouldered in the grate. Receiving, mechanically, the engrossed parchments, with quiet deliberation, Miles placed them upon the embers, took the young lady's hand, she having sought to arrest the act, lightly touched it with his lips, suffered it to be reclaimed by its owner, and answered, "There are duties which we owe to the position in which God places us. The burdens of life are assigned by an All-wise hand. The estate which you inherit can never be mine. The gold so generously lavished must remain untouched. Sure I am, cousin, that Heaven will teach that kind heart how wisely to distribute the goods so amply provided. I have enough, nor would I touch a guinea of this wealth were I penniless. To Sir

Lionel Devereux and for his blood, long since, in the last testament of the exiled knight, a full, free pardon was accorded. There also he charges on his descendants to forgive, for Christ's sake, all enemies. Let us part, Rosa, as those who both live to do God's service."

The embers, slowly changing to tinder the voluminous scroll, caused it now to burst into a bright flame. The youth added, "So perishes a cherished delusion." The maiden remained standing near the hearth-stone, lost apparently in a reverie, till, withdrawing that which seemed a jewel from his bosom, the noble heart, almost breaking with suppressed sorrow, laid in the palm, which rested upon the mantel, a slender ring.

The fingers closed tightly upon it, and now the flame died away, while without the rain began to fall and beat in great drops against the window-panes. The lovely face, pallid with watching, slowly crimsoned; the eyes, dim with the traces of recent tears, grew wondrous to behold; the hand, till now cold as if it were a part of some pure statue, became warm and dewy; the lips, compressed as if in the restraint imposed on some deep sorrow, curved full and rosy. With a light step, motioning to the young man to follow, she turned the key of an antique cabinet built into the wall. The wondering eyes beheld there no splendid heir-looms which wealth bequeaths from generation to generation; only a worn traveling shawl, an Indian basket and moccasins purchased at Niagara, the tattered muslin robe in which the somnambulist had dared the terrors of the cataract, and with them the Bible in which the young man, at her request, had written their names, and underneath the day of the rescue.

The passing Summer storm still continued without, and the rain fell in torrents. As if affected by a sudden chill and needing warmth, the lovely mystery drew the shawl from its place and wrapped it round her person. Then

doubly beautiful, as all the past, revived in one full image, seemed expressed, in beamy looks of gratitude to God, and lowly shrinking from present greatness, covering with trembling hands the face, that kindled into burning blushes, the maiden murmured, "I will! I will!" The young lover, in breathless wonder, had fallen upon his knees. The girl arose, slowly speaking in a voice almost preternatural: "We kneel together, Miles. I struggle with a tide of reviving recollections. Your coldness in the last six months has almost broken my heart. My love was killing me. I thought you estranged because reserve took the place of kind words and gentle smiles. I see it all now. Thou didst promise the entranced one to breathe no word of love to her till the eighteenth birthday. Oh, Miles! let my Master's voice say, to thee 'Ask and thou shalt receive.'"

The two were now kneeling side by side, and both for a little while seemed lost in silent prayer. The young man's arm stole around the waist of that sweet and trembling innocence; the fair head, vailed in its abundant curls, now drooped toward his breast, while the words, deep as if the soul itself pronounced them, came, "Love! I am unworthy. Nevertheless, I have besought our Savior to give thee to me. Yet not my will but His be done." The fond bosom throbbed, the full lip quivered, and then followed the reply, "I was always thine, dear one, in Heaven's purposes. Thine is Rosa Devereux's hand, given with the heart of Charity Green."

The June shower, followed by glorious sunlight, left moistness and perfume on the air. At twelve, two hours having elapsed, the mother entered. Claspng the daughter in one full embrace, it was to breathe a blessing, and then, through mingled smiles and tears, to murmur, "My dear son, take her. Let me see your happiness made perfect soon."

CHAPTER XLVII.

WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT?

Dear reader, by this time, journeying now in perilous pathways and then through pleasant fields, here weeping with those who weep, and there rejoicing with those who rejoice, we have grown, through sympathy in common friends, to feel ourselves not wholly strangers. Let us pause awhile, standing upon this sunny mound beneath yon ancient oak. It is called the Battle oak. It marks the spot, where, many hundred years ago, brave men fought nobly for hearth and altar. The spire that crowns that remote elevation rises above the church of St. Winifred's. Those distant, mellow chimes are borne from the antique house of God in the hamlet of Riverside. Below us winds that ancient road, which, where it divides the meadows, bore once the name of the Richmanstown causeway and, over this, as runs one version of the quaint, old distich,

"When Richmanstown shall cross the fen
The Wallingford returns again."

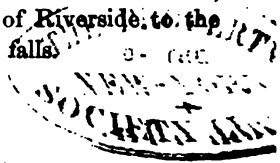
With slow and solemn pace a mourning procession draws near. Martial music from a full band wakes the slumbering echo. The drums sound as if muffled. The melody is that of some grand, funereal march or anthem. Two and two, uncovered and wearing scarf and badge, ride the retainers and tenants whose fathers served the Knights of Riverside. Those ancient banners were first unfurled in the service of the Commonwealth and long have slept amidst the heir-looms of the Priory. The coffin, upborne in state within the catafalque, upon whose lid reposes a basket-hilted sword dented with battle and etched by time, contains the earthly relics of a valiant spirit, who once rode to exile

while weeping followers gazed afar off, along this very way.

Let the music peal from hillside to hillside. The dial hands upon the face of the centuries are moving on to the endless Age of Right. England is rising from moral slumber to share in the great combats which go before the era of universal charity. Contending elements of prelacy and puritanism, that once convulsed the land, are fusing now, as when the auspicious union of the Red and White Rose foretold the grand Elizabethan age. The bitter experience of generations ripens to delicious fruit. Wise men, with clear on-look toward the future, behold the Church reaching outwardly, with motherly affection, caring for the humblest physical necessities of all who suffer; while the State, grasping at the great law of fatherhood, sees in every member a spirit to be cultured to the stature of the glorious angel, in a wise provision for every primal element of mind and heart. Let the ashes of this friend of Milton and of Cromwell, yet not less the lover of wise rule perpetuated unbroken from sire to son, returning from their long exile, be received in honor, to moulder away with forefather dust."

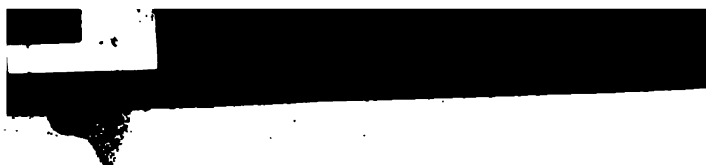
The funeral cavalcade has now entered the church of St. Winifred's. The catafalque is placed within the enclosure. The coffin is deposited in the crypt below. A tablet, in the east wall, now first uncovered, commemorates the worthy deeds of the Wallingfords who were in America.—Prayers have been offered; the sacred rites close; an organ thunders, while many voices swell the exulting anthem, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

It is a day of reconciliation. The church is filled with family friends, servants and retainers. They linger. A venerable priest opens the Psalter at the marriage service. A bridal train approach the altar. The lovely maiden, in whose pure veins flows the last blood of Lionel Devereux, with heart and hand, restores the fief of Riverside to the heir of the Wallingfords. The curtain falls.

















MAR 31 1941

